

EVERYTHING YOU
WANTED TO KNOW
ABOUT GRANTS FROM
THE S.S. BUT WERE
TOO SCARED TO
ASK.

Paisley Claimants	Monday and
Union meets	Wed. 1-3 pm
Town Hall	Every week

Claim Now!

This could be your last grant so make it BIG, and make it Now, because after November grants will be much HARDER to get.

CLOTHING NEEDS - CHECK LIST

Woman's & Girls Clothes		Man's & Boys Clothes	
Overcoat or raincoat	1	Overcoat or raincoat	1
Cardigan (jacket for girls)	1	Jacket or anorak	1
Dresses (a jumper and skirt	2	Trousers or jeans	2 pairs
or trousers count as one dress)		Sweater or pullover	1
Tights (socks for girls)	3	Socks	3 pairs
Shoes or boots	2 pairs	Boots or shoes	2 "
Slips	2	Shirts	2
Vests	2	Under-vests	2
Pants	2	Under-pants	2
Bras	2	Nightwear (pygamas)	2
Corset or girdle	1		
Nightwear (pygamas etc)	2		

If you are refused anything then appeal. Contact Paisley Claimants Union for help about Appeals.

The S.S. might try to put you on Voluntary Savings - refuse to allow this to happen. If they put you on Compulsory Savings then contact us and we'll help you appeal.

If you aren't sure if you're getting your right money then ask for a written assessment form A I24. This form will explain to you how your money is calculated.

* Keep a copy of the things you apply for.

* Get a stamped addressed envelope for the S.S. from the P.O.

PAISLEY C.U. NEEDS NEW MEMBERS

The Manager
DHSS
Gauze St
Paisley

Name

Address

Dear sir,

Date

Please visit me with 24hrs written notice to assess me for
the following items which I have ticked off below :-

A. Clothing & Bedding

Women's Clothing

	£
Boots (ankle)	12.50
Brassiere	3.00
Briefs	1.15
Cardigan	7.00
Corset	7.00
Dress-summerweight	10.00
Dress-winterweight	13.00
Dressing-gown	10.00
Jumper	6.00
Knickers	1.60
Nightdress (standard length)	5.50
Nightdress (full length)	7.00
Overcoat	35.00
Pantie-girdle	4.00
Petticoat	3.50
Pyjamas	7.50
Raincoat	25.00
Shoes	10.00
Skirt	7.50
Slippers	3.25
Stockings/tights	0.50
Trousers	8.00
Vest-cotton	1.50
Vest-woollen	3.00

Working Clothes

	£
Boiler suit	9.50
Boots	11.00
Donkey-jacket	16.00
Dungarees	7.50
Jeans	9.00
Overalls	8.50
Wellingtons	7.50

Men's Clothing

	£
Anorak	16.00
Cap	3.50
Cardigan	8.75
Dressing gown	14.00
Overcoat	38.00
Pullover	5.50
Pyjamas	7.00
Raincoat	25.00
Shirt	5.50
Shoes	10.50
Slippers	3.50
Socks	0.85
Sports-jacket	30.00
Suit	45.00
Trousers	10.50
Underpants-woollen (long)	5.00
Underpants-woollen (short)	3.95
Underpants-briefs	1.25
Vest-woollen	4.50
Vest-singlet	1.60

Bedding

Blankets (cot)	3.75
Blankets (single)	8.00
Blankets (double)	10.00
Terylene quilt (single)	10.50
Terylene quilt (double)	12.50
Pillow	3.50
Pillowcase	1.30
Sheets-cotton (single) pair	10.50
Sheet-cotton (double) pair	14.50
Sheets-flannelette (cot) pair	4.10
Sheets-flannelette (single) pair	9.00
Sheets-flannelette (double) pair	12.00
Sheets-nylon (single) pair	5.75
Sheets-nylon (double) pair	7.50

Girls' Clothing		Small to Large	
	£	£	
Blouse	3.00	3.50	
Brassiere		2.00	
Briefs		0.90	
Cardigan	3.75	5.50	
Dress-summerweight	4.50	7.00	
Dress-winterweight	6.00	8.50	
Dufflecoat	12.00	16.00	
Girdle		4.00	
Jacket/anorak	9.00	12.00	
Jumper	3.50	5.00	
Nightdress	4.00	5.50	
Overcoat	14.00	19.50	
Petticoat		2.50	
Pyjamas	4.00	6.00	
Raincoat	11.00	16.00	
Shoes	6.50	9.00	
Skirt	4.50	6.50	
Socks	0.55	0.75	
Stockings/tights		0.50	
Vest		1.10	
Wellingtons	2.75	4.50	

Boys' clothing		Small to large	
	£	£	
Dufflecoat	12.00	16.00	
Jacket/anorak	9.00	12.00	
Overcoat	15.00	20.00	
Pyjamas	4.00	5.00	
Raincoat	11.00	17.00	
Shirt	3.00	4.50	
Shoes	6.50	9.00	
Socks	0.50	0.70	
Sweater	4.00	5.50	
Trousers-long	5.50	8.00	
Trousers-short	3.50	4.50	
Underpants		1.00	
Vest		1.20	
Wellingtons	2.75	4.50	

Baby Clothing		£
Baby-gro		3.25
Napkins		0.80
Pramsuit		5.25
Vest		0.75
Wrap/shawl		4.25

- B. Decorating materials for (state NO. of rooms)
- C. Floor covering
- D. Extra wear & tear on bedding as my kid/s wet the bed
- E. New beds
- F. Diet allowance
- G. Laundry allowance
- H. Household furniture
- I. New cooker
- J. Kitchen utensils and cutlery
- K. New curtains
- L. Electric Fires
- M. Towels
- N. New iron
- O. Fireguard
- P. Hire purchase
- Q. Hot water bottles
- R. Other items

Yours faithfully,

Signed

ARE YOU BEING MUGGED BY THE D.H.S.S. ?

EVERY WEEK THOUSANDS OF CLAIMANTS ARE DONE
OUT OF PART OF THEIR S.S. MONEY BY THE D.H.S.S.
THIS MUGGING COMES UNDER THE HEADING OF VOLUNTARY/
COMPULSARY SAVINGS. THESE SO CALLED SAVINGS ONLY
SAVE THE S.S. MONEY AND STOP PEOPLE CLAIMING GRANTS
FOR CLOTHING AND OTHER ESSENTIAL ITEMS THAT THEY ARE
ENTITLED TO. THE S.S. TELL US THAT THEY ARE
HELPING US TO SAVE MONEY THAT CAN BE CLAIMED
BACK EVERY 13 WEEKS - THIS IS A LOAD OF CRAP!
SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT IS TOO LOW TO LIVE ON,
NEVER MIND SAVE. SO IF YOU ARE ON 'SAVINGS'
APPEAL NOW OR DEMAND YOUR FULL MONEY BACK
EVERY WEEK WHICH IS YOUR RIGHT.

Contact Paisley C.U.
if you want to Appeal
or if the S.S. refuse your
money.

PAISLEY S.S. RECRUITS MORE S.S. SPIES

MR. COWAN MANAGER OF PAISLEY D.H.S.S. WELCOMES THE NEWS THAT HE IS TO GET MORE SPECIAL INVESTIGATORS, BUT WHAT HE DOESN'T WELCOME ARE THE PEOPLE WHO COME TO GAUZE ST., D.H.S.S. CLAIMING WHAT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO.

Defamation

APART FROM ALL THIS THE S.S. ARE NOW OPENLY ENCOURAGING NEIGHBOURS TO SPY AND INFORM ON EACH OTHER. PAISLEY CLAIMANTS UNION IS MOUNTING A CAMPAIGN AGAINST NASTY NEIGHBOURS WHO DO THE DIRTY WORK OF THE S.S. ONE OF THE WORST EXAMPLES OF THIS SNOOPING IS WHEN WOMEN HAVE THEIR ORDER BOOKS STOPPED UNDER THE SO-CALLED CO-HABITATION RULE. ANY WOMAN WHO IS THREATEND WITH THE CO-HABITATION RULE SHOULD CONTACT PAISLEY CLAIMANTS UNION WHO WILL HELP HER GET HER MONEY BACK.



PAISLEY CLAIMANTS UNION
STARTING
MARCH 3RD **MEETS EVERY**
MONDAY & WEDNESDAY 1-3 P.M.
PAISLEY TOWN HALL * MONDAYS
FROM MARCH 3RD

THE SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT ACT 1976

Below are reproduced sections of the above Act, of particular importance in administering the Scheme.

SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT

Right to and amount of Supp. Ben.

1.-(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, every person in Great Britain of or over the age of 16 whose resources are insufficient to meet his requirements shall be entitled to benefit as follows

- (a) a supplementary pension if he has attained pensionable age, that is to say, in the case of a man, the age of 65 and, in the case of a woman, the age of 60;
- (b) a supplementary allowance if he has not attained pensionable age;

and to such benefit by way of a single payment to meet an exceptional need as may be determined under section 3 of this Act.

(2) Where, under the provisions of this Act, the requirements and resources of any person fall to be aggregated with, and treated as, those of another person, that other person only shall be entitled to supplementary benefit.

2.-(1) Subject to section 15 of this Act (appeals), the question whether any person is entitled to supplementary benefit, and the amount of any such benefit, shall be determined by the Supplementary Benefits Commission.

(2) Entitlement to, and the amount of, any supplementary benefit shall be determined in accordance with:

- (a) the provisions of this Part of the Act and Schedule 1 to this Act; and
- (b) any regulations made by the Secretary of State, with the consent of the Treasury, under this subsection.

3.-(1) Where it appears reasonable to the Commission in all the circumstances they may determine that supplementary benefit shall be paid to a person by way of a single payment to meet an exceptional need.

4.-(1) Nothing in sections 6 to 8 of this Act.....shall prevent the payment of benefit in an urgent case.

(2) In determining whether any supplementary benefit is apyable by virtue of this section, and the amount or nature of any such benefit, the Commission shall not be bound by anything in Schedule 1 to this Act, or in any regulations made under this Act, which appears to them inappropriate in the circumstances of the case.

(3) Where, by virtue only of this section, any sums are paid to a person engaged in remunerative full-time work, the Commission may determine that the whole or part of those sums shall be recoverable from him by the Secretary of State, if they are satisfied that the circumstances are such that the recovery would be equitable.

5. The Commission may determine that the right of any person to a supplementary allowance shall be subject to the condition that he is registered for employment in such manner as may be prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State under this section.

6.-(1) Except as provided in the following provisions of this section and in section 9(1) of this Act..... for any period during which a person is engaged in remunerative full-time work he shall not be entitled to supplementayr benefit.

(2) The Secretary of State may, by regulations made under this sub-section, make provision for postponing the exclusion of persons becoming engaged in remunerative full-time work from a right to supplementary benefit under sub-section (1) above for such period from the beginning of their engagement as may be specified in the regulations.

7.-(1) A person attending a school, or receiving full-time instruction of a kind given in schools, shall not be entitled to supplementary benefit; but where it appears to the Commission that there are exceptional circumstances justifying it, they may award supplementary benefit to a person who would be entitled to it but for this section.

8.-(1) Subject to sub-section (2) below, where a person -

(a) is, by reason of a stoppage of work which is due to a trade dispute at his place of employment, without employment for any period during the stoppage; and

(b) has not during that stoppage become bona fide employed elsewhere in the occupation which he usually follows, or become regularly engaged in some other occupation;
his requirements for that period shall be disregarded for the purposes

of supplementary benefit except so far as those requirements include the requirement to provide for any other person.

(2) Sub-section (1) above does not apply in the case of a person who proves that he is not participating in or directly interested in the trade dispute which caused the stoppage of work.

11.-(1) Where it appears to the Commission that, by reason of exceptional circumstances, the requirements of any person can best be met by the provision of goods or services instead of the whole or part of any payment to which he would otherwise be entitled under this Act, they may determine that goods or services shall be so provided under arrangements made by them on behalf of the Secretary of State.

(2) In making a determination under this section to meet sudden and urgent need the Commission may dispense with inquiry into resources or other circumstances and with compliance with any regulations made under this Act.

(3) In relation to any goods or services provided in pursuance of this section, references in this Act to the amount of supplementary benefit shall be taken to refer to the value of the goods or services.

SCHEDULE 1. Adjustment for exceptional circumstances.

4.-(1) Where there are exceptional circumstances:

- (a) supplementary benefit may be awarded at an amount exceeding that, if any, calculated in accordance with paras. 1-3 of this Schedule; and
- (b) a supplementary allowance may be reduced below the amount calculated in accordance with those paras., or may be withheld;

as may be appropriate to take account of those circumstances.

C R E D I T A G R E E M E N T S

IF A SHOP OR A FIRM REFUSES TO GIVE ME CREDIT TERMS WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

1. Firstly ask the firm if they used a Credit Reference Agency and if so which one? You can do this by putting your request in writing within 28 days. The trader must reply within seven working days.
2. Once you know the name and address of the Credit Reference Agency write to them requesting a copy of the file they have on you. You must enclose a non-returnable fee of 25p with your letter. The said agency is bound by law to send you a copy of the file within seven working days.
3. If once you have read the file, you do not agree with any part of it, you can ask them to correct it by sending them a written NOTICE OF CORRECTION of not more than 200 words. On receipt of your NOTICE OF CORRECTION the Credit Reference Agency has 28 days to either correct their file or write to you stating that they do not accept your NOTICE OF CORRECTION.

At this stage you should seek good advice. Contact the Community Information Centre, 121 Langlands Road, Govan, Glasgow, G51 3TL Tel: 041 445 4222 or 041 440 2563 - or your local Consumer Advice Department.

Note

Even if the Credit Reference Agency accepts your NOTICE OF CORRECTION this does not guarantee that the trader will offer you credit terms. All traders hold the right of discretion to whom they enter into agreement with.

UNEMPLOYED ?

A CLAIMANTS UNION GUIDE TO SURVIVAL FOR ALL CLAIMING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

If you are one of the million and a half unemployed whose livelihood is being sacrificed in a futile effort to save our obsolete economic system, then you and your family have the right to an adequate income while you are out of work. So has every person and every family whose resources do not match their needs.

Under the 1976 Social Security Act, every person is entitled to an income to meet their needs by way of Social Security Benefits. In reality, these benefits only allow you to survive at starvation level....if you can get them !

Recent research by Edinburgh University has shown that more than half those claiming Social Security Benefits have had them wrongly assessed. In October 1975, the DHSS admitted themselves that they knew that 1.5 million families and 690,000 pensioners were not getting the benefits they are entitled to.

This is not accidental. Most Social Security Officers DO know what they are doing when they refuse you your rights. Some do not understand their own regulations and some are just bloody-minded. For the most part, they are acting under instructions designed to humiliate and harrass you into dropping your claim - particularly if you are involved in industrial action. They are making YOU pay the price of our economic shambles.

ASK YOURSELF ----- DO YOU KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND HOW TO GET THEM ?

Here are some of the benefits you are entitled to from November 1977:

1. UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

This is due to you if you have made at least 26 national insurance payments ("stamps") in the last contribution year, or if you have had these credited to you. Unemployment Benefit is based on a standard rate PLUS an earnings-related supplement.

The current Standard Rates of Unemployment (& Sickness) Benefits are:-

Single Person	£14.70
Wife or other dependant adult....	£ 9.10
Married women	£10.50
First child	£ 3.50
Each other child	£ 3.00

MANY PEOPLE ON UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT ALSO QUALIFY FOR SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS. IF YOUR INCOME IS LESS THAN THE AMOUNT OF SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS YOU ARE ENTITLED TO CLAIM SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS TO BRING YOU UP TO THIS FIGURE. YOU CLAIM THESE BENEFITS BY GETTING FORM B1 AT THE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE AND TAKING IT TO THE LOCAL DHSS OFFICE.

/cont'd.....

2. SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS

These are available to ANY person over 16 if you are registered for work or are retired or sick, or a single parent family etc. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO HAVE HAD A JOB OR PAID NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS TO GET THEM. They represent the MINIMUM income that any family or individual is expected to survive on. If your income is less than the figures given below, you can claim supplementary benefits up to that amount. (Disregard the first £4 of a wife's earnings and £2 part-time earnings, £6 for single parent families).

	<u>Ordinary Rate</u>	<u>Longterm Rate</u> (Claims over 2 yrs & pensioners).
Couple	£23.55	£28.35
Single householder.....	£14.50	£17.90
Any other person aged:		
18 or over.....	£11.60	£14.16
16-17.....	£ 8.90	
13-15.....	£ 7.40	
11-12.....	£ 6.10	
5-10.....	£ 4.95	
under 5.....	£ 4.10	

PLUS - FULL RENT AND RATES (or £1.45 if you are living with parents or in someone else's household).

OR - Full rates, ground rent, insurance, mortgage interest and repairs if living in your own house.

PLUS - EXTRA WEEKLY AMOUNTS AND LUMP SUM PAYMENTS (called "EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS):-

Heating Allowance - given if your home is difficult to heat or in the event of age or illness. The rate is 80p, £1.60 or £2.10.

Diet Allowance - for those needing special foods - most old or sick persons do! Get a doctor's note. Rates are 90p or £2.10.

H.P. Payments - for essential items of furniture or clothing.

Laundry Costs - during illness or if you lack proper washing or drying facilities.

Fares - for visits to relatives in hospital or prison.

PLUS OTHER LUMP SUM PAYMENTS FOR:-

Clothing and footwear	Gas and electric bills - if disconnection would cause hardship. (Refuse entry for disconnection until the DHSS have sorted out your case. APPEAL if they refuse to help).
Furniture and bedding	House repairs
Floor covering and curtains	H.P. debts for essential items.
Re-decorating	ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC.
Travelling expenses	
Funeral Expenses	
Starting work tools and clothes	

ALL THE ABOVE WEEKLY AND LUMP SUM PAYMENTS HAVE TO BE ARGUED AND FOUGHT FOR. THEY CAN BE OBTAINED - BUT GET ADVICE FIRST, IF POSSIBLE.

/cont'd.....

3. OTHER BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO THOSE ON UNEMPLOYMENT OR SUPPLEMENTARY

Free prescriptions	Free welfare milk and vitamins
Free optical and dental treatment	Free school meals
Rent and rate rebates	School clothing and travelling allowance
Free college courses and exam fees	Home help
Education Maintenance Allowance - for kids in education over 16	
Attendance Allowance - for those needing attention because of sickness or disablement.	ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC.

COLLEGE COURSES - Any person on Unemployment Benefit is entitled to attend any college course. Some courses carry an extra training allowance called "TOPS".

Any person receiving Supplementary Benefit is entitled to attend a college course provided it does not involve attendance for more than three days a week or the equivalent.

IN ALL CASES YOU MUST KEEP REGISTERED FOR WORK AND BE PREPARED TO SAY THAT YOU WOULD LEAVE COLLEGE IF A SUITABLE JOB WAS OFFERED.

4. STUDENTS Students on courses which are not "full time of a kind available in schools" can claim Supplementary Benefits during any holiday period - provided they register for work. You do not need to have had a job or paid national insurance contributions. Any student who is refused benefits during holidays, or in the period before starting college, or while attending college for three days a week or less, is urged to appeal and to contact the Claimants Union.

5. STRIKERS A person involved in industrial action (strikes, lock-out, occupation etc.), can claim Supplementary Benefits for dependants. They can claim Supplementary Benefits for themselves - if they can prove urgent need (Section 4, 1976 Act). This is particularly important for single workers.

A person not directly interested in the trade dispute can claim Unemployment Benefit and Supplementary Benefits for themselves and their dependants.

GETTING FULL BENEFITS DURING A STRIKE CAN BE COMPLICATED AND DIFFICULT. ALL STRIKERS ARE URGED TO SET UP A SPECIAL STRIKES CLAIMS COMMITTEE. THE CLAIMANTS UNION OFFERS A SPECIAL SERVICE TO STRIKERS AND STRIKE CLAIMS COMMITTEES, INCLUDING OFFICE AND MEETING FACILITIES.

Remember, you will not get your rights simply by asking. You will first have to learn what they are - then how to fight to get them. Start by asking for a "NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT" (A124) from the Social Security Office. You have the right to demand this. This shows what they say you are getting and what they are taking off you. Check your benefits against the information given on this leaflet. If you think you are not getting enough, and remember, the odds are that you won't be, contact your LOCAL CLAIMANTS UNION -----

OR WRITE TO: CLAIMANTS UNION SCOTTISH REGION
INFORMATION LIBRARY
80 YORKHILL STREET
GLASGOW G3.



HOMELESS
OVERCROWDED
ASKING FOR A TRANSFER

CLAIMANTS UNION
GUIDE TO SURVIVAL
FOR ALL CITIZEN RATEPAYERS
APPLYING FOR A COUNCIL HOUSE

If you are one of the 50,000 people on the waiting list for a council house, then ask yourself these questions. Do you know your rights and how to get them?

THE WAITING LIST

All applications for a house are placed on the so-called waiting list. The Housing Management are supposed to have two kinds of waiting lists. (a) A Priority List and (b) A Supplementary List. The Priority List is supposed to give preference to applicants living in dangerous or condemned houses, also if you are ill or disabled and your present house is detrimental to your health. (House Letting Regulation No. 3, sections A and D - 1977). You should also be on the priority list if you are overcrowded. See Letting Regulation No. 3, section G - 1977. The Supplementary List is merely all those other applicants who are not considered by the Housing Management as being in urgent need of a council house.

If you think you are being kept waiting unreasonably long, ask them which list you are on and do it in writing. If you think you should be on the Priority List make sure they know. Don't forget to back up your case with evidence. Get a letter from your doctor or health visitor.

HOW MANY OFFERS

It has been a common myth that you are only allowed three offers. This is a lie. There is nothing in the House Letting Regulations that states an applicant will only receive three offers. If they threaten you with this one, complain to the Manager, but make sure you have witnesses.

Another trick they use against you is to say that you refused to view an offer. Always view every offer they make you. (You can always claim your fares from the Social Security, if you are claiming benefit.) You can even just look at the area from the bus. But make sure you have reason to refuse any house they try to make you take.

If you are unemployed, sick, disabled or a one parent family, in fact anyone on Social Security, then you will be pushed out to one of the many housing schemes. Hard to let houses are used as the dumping grounds for people on welfare benefits.

THE INTERVIEW CLERKS

Most of the clerks at the counter are young and inexperienced. Since all houses are given on discretionary decisions, the counter clerks know little or nothing about your case. Many of them are cheeky and insulting to the applicants whom they discriminate against.

If they harrass or threaten you, get their names. Always have someone with you when you are being interviewed. After all, without us, they would have no job. Don't forget to tell them that.

Do not give any more information than you have to. If they ask you embarrassing questions, refuse to answer them - then complain, but try and have proof of your complaint.

Nothing you tell them is ever kept confidential. The Housing Management exchanges information with the Social Security. They also provide information to debt collecting agencies, so be careful what you tell them. They keep files on every family ever housed in a council house. They keep close records of rent arrears, if you are off sick, etc., etc.

HOUSING TRANSFERS

More than half of the people who visit the Housing Department are seeking a transfer from their present house.

Don't accept any of their lies. Housing transfers work on the same procedure as for fresh applicants - make sure you can argue your case. SEE HOUSE LETTING REGULATIONS No. 8 - 1977. If you want moved for health reasons, get a letter from your doctor. Some doctors don't like getting involved with the council bureaucracy. If you are refused, change your doctor and complain. (Contact the Claimants Union for more help with this.)

FIGHTING BACK

If you think you are being blacklisted or discriminated against by the Housing Management, try to have proof of your case - always keep copies of your letters. They keep a file on you, do the same to them. Contacting your councillor or M.P. to make a complaint is of little use. They only write to the Housing Department over your head, so you never get to know what is being said against you. Don't allow Social Workers or Welfare Department officials to bargain over your head, demand to know how your case is being dealt with. If we fight back together, we can force them to give us decent housing conditions. If you think your case is getting out of hand - contact the Claimants Union.

THE GOLDEN RULES

1. Always keep copies of your letters. Do not part with any letter you receive from the Housing Management Department.
2. Demand to know what list you are on - if you think you should be on the Priority List, try and get evidence - doctor's letter, public health, etc.
3. Make sure your representative understands your case and keeps you informed. Tell your councillor you want to know what is happening. If he refuses for any reason, contact your M.P. (See the Claimants Union on this one.)
4. View every offer they make you - claim your fares if you are on Benefit - contact the Claimants Union for advice with this one.
5. Ask at the Housing Management Department to see a copy of the Letting Regulations. They should be on public display.

Claimants Unions : Drunchapel Claimants Union
 Canus Place Centre
 Airgold Drive
 Glasgow G 15

GAS ELECTRICITY FUEL—BILLS

HOW TO AVOID DISCONNECTION OF YOUR SUPPLY

GAS, ELECTRICITY and FUEL BILLS

The DHSS CAN pay these bills if they choose. You have the right to have them paid if you are in urgent need, or if non-payment would cause you or your family serious hardship. To get the DHSS to pay, take your demand note to the local DHSS office. You will have to argue your case very carefully so have it prepared. You should be able to explain why you cannot pay the bill due to some exceptional circumstances such as a family misfortune like sickness, or an accident, or a change of heating system or some other unforeseen expense. An unexpected increase in charges is another reason, or if you should have had a heating allowance in the past. Another reason is if the disconnection of your supply would cause you or your family hardship. This is particularly important where there are old or sick persons or children.

REMEMBER THE DHSS CAN PAY THESE BILLS IF THEY CHOOSE. BILLS OF OVER £100 HAVE BEEN PAID ON TYNESIDE RECENTLY.

DISCONNECTION OF SUPPLY

You should resist disconnection of your gas or electricity supply by all possible means. Remember that if you are disconnected you will have to pay your bill plus an advance payment of about £20 plus a reconnection charge of £5 before your supply will be restored. The Gas and Electricity Boards SAY that they will not disconnect if it will cause serious hardship. See that you keep them to this. Some officials will ignore this rule if they can get away with it. If an official comes to disconnect your supply REFUSE HIM ENTRY TO YOUR HOUSE. Tell him this will cause your family hardship. Say payment is being considered by the DHSS. They have been given instructions NOT to disconnect while the DHSS are considering the case. Be careful that your children or a neighbour do not let an official in to disconnect in your absence. Some officials have tricked their way in and disconnected a supply on the pretext that they only want to "read the meter".

Sometimes they will try to frighten you with the police who, they say, force their way in. They need an official warrant to do this and this takes time. Even then you can resist disconnection if there are old, or young or sick people in the house. Get a neighbour or a friend to help and ring the social services, if things seem to be getting out of control.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A HEATING ALLOWANCE

Write to the local office of the DHSS saying you want a heating allowance. You can use the form attached to this leaflet. Get a free stamped addressed envelope from any post office. In most cases a visitor from the DHSS will call at your home. Make sure that you have your case prepared before they come. Try to have a friend or neighbour with you when they call. Never meet the DHSS alone if you can help it.

WHAT TO DO IF AN ALLOWANCE OR A PAYMENT IS REFUSED

Often you are refused benefits wrongly. Over 50% have been found to have been wrongly calculated. Sometimes they send you a piece of their meaningless official jargon hoping they will put you off.

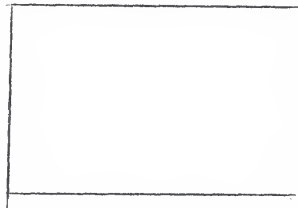
DON'T GIVE UP. Write and ask for an official explanation. If you are not satisfied SAY YOU WANT TO APPEAL. Your case will then be heard by an independent tribunal. You don't HAVE to attend but it is better if you do. The Tribunal is very informal - NOT like a court of law. You can take a friend or relative with you. A large number of cases which have been refused by the DHSS are allowed by the Tribunals. It takes about 3 weeks to get a Tribunal hearing.

DON'T FORGET TO REFUSE TO ALLOW DISCONNECTION OF YOUR SUPPLY WHILE AWAITING A TRIBUNAL. IF AT ANY STAGE YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH YOUR TREATMENT BY THE DHSS AND YOU WANT TO FIGHT BACK

CONTACT THE CLAIMANTS UNION.

WRITE TO :-
CLAIMANTS UNION
SCOTTISH REGION
INFORMATION LIBRARY
80 YORKHILL STREET
GLASGOW G3.

LOCAL CLAIMANTS UNION



A SCHOOL LEAVERS GUIDE TO SURVIVAL

A GUIDE TO SURVIVAL FOR SCHOOL-LEAVERS, STUDENTS, AND UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE, PRODUCED BY GLASGOW CLAIMANTS UNION AND SOUTH SHIELDS CLAIMANTS UNION WITH THE HELP OF UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE.

This leaflet gives information on your rights and practical advice on how to get them. This is necessary because we live in what is called a Capitalist Society, whose main course is making money. You will have to learn how to deal with this system. (You can also help those who want to change it!)

Remember that as a person who has left school you have certain rights. This leaflet is designed to help you fight to get them.

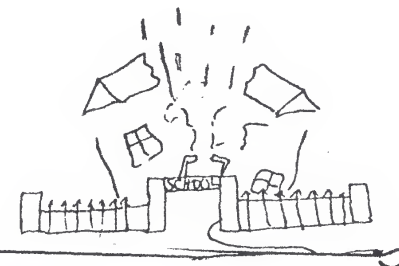
SCHOOL LEAVERS

School Leavers. If you leave school at 16, you will be entitled to Supplementary Benefits immediately.

If you say you intend to return to the 6th Form or College, benefits may be refused. This is NOT the law - simply a self-made DHSS rule.

If you think you might go back to school or college, it is better to keep this to yourself! If you decide to go back to school any threat that you will have to repay benefits is not true.

Any other income you might have over £2.00 per week will be deducted from your Supplementary Benefits. This includes earnings from a part-time job.



HOW TO CLAIM BENEFITS

You have to "register" for unemployment at an Employment Exchange and "sign on" as available for work. In some cases, school leavers have to go first to the Careers Office.

BEFORE LEAVING THE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE MAKE SURE YOU ASK FOR, AND FILL IN A B1 FORM. If you don't do this you cannot get Supplementary Benefits.

GETTING YOUR RIGHTS.

Do not expect to get your rights simply by asking for them. You will first have to learn what they are and then be prepared to fight for them.

You must be prepared for Officials NOT being helpful, not giving you the facts, and even giving you FALSE information. Some will try to make you feel guilty about not having a job.

You will be kept hanging about. DON'T BE PUT OFF! This is part of the system to discourage people from claiming their rights. And if it's tough for you - think what it is like for an elderly or sick person - or a woman with kids.

Remember also that the DHSS make up their own rules. They are NOT the law and can be challenged. If you are not satisfied with your treatment - COMPLAIN TO THE MANAGER. If you are not satisfied with your benefits - ASK FOR WRITTEN ASSESSMENT. You have a legal right to this. If you are still not satisfied - DEMAND an APPEAL FORM.

Part-time Students i.e. students attending college up to three days a week or six half-days, or the equivalent, can claim benefits during term time - as well as during holidays. You must say that you are prepared to give up the course if suitable work is found. Get further advice on this from the Claimants Union.

Full-time Students are deemed to be not available for work during term time and therefore not qualified for benefits. They CAN obtain benefits during holidays end in the period between leaving School and starting College, i.e. whenever they are 'available for work'.

Refusing a job. You do NOT have to take any lousy job offered to you - although they might try to pretend you do. Sometimes, they try to get young people to do rotten jobs no one else will touch. You don't have to do it. If the job is not "suitable" refuse it. If you take a job and find it is unsuitable - leave it. Get further advice on this from the Claimants Union.

The Armed Forces As a young person you are subjected to Government pressure to join the Armed Forces. If you live in the North East or other areas of high unemployment you will have to face special recruitment campaigns designed to exploit the pressure on you to get a training and find a job.

The areas of high unemployment are used to provide the cannon-fodder for the forces.

And don't be conned by Army propaganda about "Training for a trade". Ask at the Employment Exchange how many vacancies they have for Field Gun Mechanics or Chieftain Tank Drivers!

SOCIAL SECURITY SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS

These are available to every person over 16 who has left school. You do NOT need to have worked or paid National Insurance Contributions ("Stamps"). All you need to show is that you are available for work and registered for employment.

If you are registered for employment today there is not much chance of you being offered a suitable job. BUT ITS NOT YOUR FAULT IF THERE IS NO WORK.

SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS ARE DUE TO YOU AS A RIGHT. THEY HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH YOUR PARENTS OR THEIR INCOME.

The current standard weekly rates of Supplementary Benefits are:-

Couple (married or not)	£20.65
Single Householder	£12.70
Any other persons aged:	
18 or over	£10.15
16-17	£7.80
13-15	£6.50
11-12	£5.35
5 -10	£4.35
under 5	£3.60

PLUS - FULL RENT AND RATES if you rent or share accommodation. Note that if you rent or share, you should claim as a 'single Householder' even if your name does not appear on the rent book. Get a landlord's letter stating you are a bona fide tenant. If you are not a householder, i.e. living with parents or in someone else's household, you claim £1.20 as nominal rent.

PLUS - Extra discretionary weekly amounts such as: Heating Allowance, Diet Allowance, H.P. Payments for essential items etc.

PLUS - Discretionary lump sum payments to meet "exceptional need" e.g. for essential clothes, bedding, furniture etc. Also lump sum "emergency payments" to cover emergency situations e.g. in the event of fire, or if you are robbed, or evicted, or find you are without means of subsistence. This entitlement to emergency payments (Section 4 of the 1976 Social Security Act) overrides any disqualification to benefits that might otherwise exist.

- - - - -

But if you think they will tell you about the EXTRAS you can claim, or the most financially rewarding way of claiming, then forget it they are not on your side. If you are a wealthy person you can obtain the services of people who will help you arrange your affairs so that you pay the minimum of tax, and make the most profit out of any savings. But when you are poor, the only place you will get such advice is from your Local Claimants Union. Why should you be fiddled, cheated and robbed by the SS? Always ORGANISE TO CLAIM and NEVER MEET THE SS ALONE, even in your own home.

CLAIMANTS UNIONS

GLASGOW C.U.
ST BRIDE'S CENTRE
19/25 ROSEVALE STREET
PARTICK
GLASGOW G11. Tel: 339 3292.
THURSDAYS - 7.30pm.

SOUTH SHIELDS C.U.
PEOPLE'S PLACE
DERBY TERRACE
SOUTH SHIELDS
Tel: 65062

CLAIMANTS UNION

LOCAL CLAIMANTS UNION FOR CORRESPONDENCE →

SOCIAL SECURITY - EXTRA HEATING ADDITIONS FROM NOVEMBER, 1977

ILLNESS AND ILL HEALTH

Extra heating may be needed if you or a member of your immediate family is suffering from a long-term (Chronic) illness or a short-term (Acute) illness. The Social Security interpret that, in their leaflet No. QC2 to mean:-

- A) Mobility is restricted £0.80 per week
- B) Chronic ill health £0.80 per week
- C) Claimant is housebound £1.60 per week
- D) There is serious illness £1.60 per week
- E) Claimant is bedfast £2.40 per week
- F) There is serious illness needing constant temperature day and night..... £2.40 per week

If you think you qualify for any of the above then make sure the Local Office of the Security know.

The S.S. won't know this if you don't tell them, SO TELL THEM in writing if necessary.

HARD TO HEAT HOUSES

If you have a large room, high ceilings, (over 8ft), stone floors or rising damp, then you can claim that your house is hard to heat, for which the S.S. can make you an extra weekly addition.

The rate for a hard to heat house is 80p per week.

Extremely hard to heat house is £1.60 per week.

DON'T BE PUT OFF BY THE SOCIAL SECURITY VISITORS.

The S.S. Visitor will try to put you off from claiming your extra heating additions. Here are a few points you can use in your case.

BUILDING REGULATIONS

Building regulations say that a new house must have cavity walls, 2 ins of insulation, also must have proper insulation in the loft, and ceilings of the room must not be more than 8 ft. high.

If your home is not up to these standards then CLAIM. Your house is harder to heat than a new house. Tell the S.S. you'll be willing to have the new house INSTEAD of the heating addition if they insist!

IF YOU ARE REFUSED DON'T FORGET TO APPEAL

CONTACT YOUR CLAIMANTS UNION AND GET THEM TO BACK YOU UP.

IF IN DOUBT ALWAYS CLAIM.

EXTRA HEATING ALLOWANCE

CLAIM NOW

UNEMPLOYED
PENSIONER
SICK
DISABLED
WIDOW
ONE PARENT FAMILY

CLAIMING SOCIAL SECURITY
CLAIMANTS UNION
GUIDE TO SURVIVAL

When you have to claim Social Security (S.S.), you become aware of just how much the State and the bosses collude to oppress you and make your life as difficult as possible. The harsh reality of claiming benefit sometimes comes as a shock to people who have never claimed S.S. before.

The bosses and the Government foster the myth of scroungers on the Welfare State in an attempt to divide workers from Claimants. Fiddling the S.S. is like fiddling for peanuts - we are all, whether in work or out are fighting for crumbs from their gigantic profits.

KEEPING YOU IN MISERY

Parliament fixes the level at which Claimants are allowed to live. They make sure that benefits cover only the bare essentials. The Humiliating Means Test and the wide discretionary powers of the S.S. are accompanied by various denials of 'entitlement' designed to control Claimants' lives.

MAKE SURE YOU KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Below is the current list of benefit rates, starting from November 13th 1978. These will allow you to survive at starvation level, if you can get them. Claim for all the extras you are entitled to, but try and get advice first if possible.

1. UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

This is due to you if you have made at least 26 National Insurance payments ("stamps") in the last contribution year, or if you have had these credited to you. Unemployment Benefit is based on a standard rate PLUS an earnings-related supplement.

The current Standard Rates of Unemployment (& Sickness) Benefits are :-

Single Person	£15.75
Wife or other dependent adult..	£ 9.75
Child Dependent.....	£ 1.85

MANY PEOPLE ON UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT ALSO QUALIFY FOR SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS. IF YOUR INCOME IS LESS THAN THE AMOUNT OF SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS, YOU ARE ENTITLED TO CLAIM SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS TO BRING YOU UP TO THIS FIGURE. YOU CLAIM THESE BENEFITS BY GETTING FORM B1 AT THE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE AND TAKING IT TO THE LOCAL DHSS OFFICE.

/cont'd.....

2. SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS

These are available to ANY person over 16, if you are registered for work or are retired or sick, or a single parent family, etc. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO HAVE HAD A JOB, OR PAID NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS TO GET THEM. They represent the MINIMUM income that any family or individual is expected to survive on. If your income is less than the figures given below, you can claim Supplementary Benefits up to that amount. (Disregard the first £4 of a wife's earnings and £2 part-time earnings, £6 for single parent families.)

	<u>Ordinary Rate</u>	<u>Longterm Rate</u> (Claims over 2 yrs. & pensioners).
Couple	£25.25	£31.55
Single householder.....	£15.55	£19.19
Any other person aged:		
18 Or over	£12.45	£15.95
16-17	£ 9.55	
13-15	£ 7.95	
11-12	£ 6.55	
5-10	£ 5.30	
under 5	£ 4.40	

PLUS - FULL RENT AND RATES (or £1.45 if you are living with parents or in someone elses house).

OR - Full rates, ground rent, insurance, mortgage interest and repairs if living in your own house.

PLUS - EXTRA WEEKLY AMOUNTS AND LUMP SUM PAYMENTS (called "EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS") :-

Heating Allowance - given if your home is difficult to heat or in the event of age or illness. The rate is 85p, £1.70 or £2.55

Diet Allowance - for those needing special foods - most old or sick persons do ! Get a doctor's note. Rates are 95p or £2.25.

H.P. Payments - for essential items of furniture or clothing.

Laundry Costs - during illness or if you lack proper washing or drying facilities.

Fares - for visits to relatives in hospital or prison.

PLUS OTHER LUMP SUM PAYMENTS FOR :-

Clothing and footwear	Travelling expenses
Furniture and bedding	Funeral expenses
Floor covering and curtains	Starting work tools and clothes
re-decorating	House repairs

/cont'd.....

Gas and electric bill - if disconnection would cause hardship. (Refuse entry for disconnection until the DHSS have sorted out your case. APPEAL if they refuse to help).

H.P. debts for essential items
ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC.

ALL THE ABOVE WEEKLY AND LUMP SUM PAYMENTS HAVE TO BE ARGUED AND FOUGHT FOR. THEY CAN BE OBTAINED - BUT GET ADVICE FIRST, IF POSSIBLE.

3. OTHER BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO THOSE ON UNEMPLOYMENT OR SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT.

Free prescriptions	Free welfare milk and vitamins
Free optical and dental treatment	Free school meals
Rent and rate rebates	School clothing and travelling
Free college courses and exam fees	Allowance
Education Maintenance Allowance - for children in education over 16	Home help
	Attendance Allowance - for those needing attention because of sickness or disablement.

ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC.

COLLEGE COURSES - Any person on Unemployment Benefit is entitled to attend any college course. Some courses carry an extra training allowance called "TOPS".

Any person receiving Supplementary Benefit is entitled to attend a college course provided it does not involve attendance for more than three days a week or the equivalent.

IN ALL CASES YOU MUST KEEP REGISTERED FOR WORK AND BE PREPARED TO SAY THAT YOU WOULD LEAVE COLLEGE IF A SUITABLE JOB WAS OFFERED.

4. STUDENTS Students on courses which are not "full time of a kind available in schools" can claim Supplementary Benefits during any holiday period - provided they register for work. You do not need to have had a job or paid National Insurance Contributions. Any student who is refused benefits during holidays, or in the period before starting college, or while attending college for three days a week or less, is urged to appeal and to contact the Claimants Union.

5. STRIKERS A person involved in industrial action (strikes, lock-out, occupation, etc.) can claim Supplementary Benefits for Dependents. They can claim Supplementary Benefits for themselves - if they can prove urgent need (Section 4, 1976 Act.) This is particularly important for single workers. A person not directly interested in the trade dispute can claim Unemployment Benefit and Supplementary Benefits for themselves and their dependents.

GETTING FULL BENEFITS DURING A STRIKE CAN BE COMPLICATED AND DIFFICULT. ALL STRIKERS ARE URGED TO SET UP A SPECIAL STRIKES CLAIMS COMMITTEE. THE CLAIMANTS UNION OFFERS A SPECIAL SERVICE TO STRIKERS AND STRIKE CLAIMS COMMITTEES, INCLUDING OFFICE AND MEETING FACILITIES.

Remember, you will not get your rights simply by asking. You will first have to learn what they are - then how to fight to get them. Start by asking for a "NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT" (A124) from the Social Security Office. You have the right to demand this. This shows what they say you are getting and what they are taking off you. Check your benefits against the information given on this leaflet. If you think you are not getting enough and remember, the odds are that you won't be, contact you LOCAL CLAIMANTS UNION -----

YOUR NEAREST
CLAIMANTS UNION _____

--

S U P P L E M E N T A R Y P E N S I O N .

The majority of pensioners in Britain are 'entitled' to a Supplementary Pension. However, many don't claim for various reasons. It is often said that "Pensioners are too proud to claim"; or that they are ignorant of their 'rights'. The real reason is only too plain : SUPPLEMENTARY PENSIONS ARE BASED ON A MEANS TEST. And ALL "Means-tests" are humiliating for the Claimant.

Before you obtain a Supplementary Pension you have to supply the Social Security with a great deal of information and evidence about your income, expenditure, and family circumstances. INCOME: You will be asked questions about any savings or capital; asked to show Pension Books or any other benefits or allowances you might get. EXPENDITURE: They want proof of your weekly rent and rates (they note any rent arrears), and deductions are made for free electricity or gas, free cutlery, crockery or bed linen. But the most vicious part of the Means Test is their investigation into FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES. We all know about the "Household Means Test" of the 30's well things haven't changed much since those days. The SS want to know who you are living with and your friendship to such person(s). Say for instance you are living with a son or daughter. Then usually you are treated as a mere dependent of theirs, - you don't get the full Supplementary Pension rate, and they are expected to subsidise you. Again, anyone in the same accommodation as you is normally expected to pay 50% (or even more) of your rent and rates. If a pensioner is living with anyone of the opposite sex, who is in full time work, and not a relative, then he or she might be expected to support you entirely under the 'cohabitation rule'. ETC. ABOLITION OF THE MEANS TEST IS A MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE CLAIMANTS UNION MOVEMENT.

With every Means Test there goes SECRECY and INVESTIGATION. The controls and moral judgements attached to the Supplementary Benefit system are well shrouded in secrecy. There are thousands of pages of SECRET CODES governed by the Official Secrets Act which incorporate civil servants' views and value judgements on matters such as work, leisure, sexual, childrearing and other habits of the working class. Like Oliver Twist, Claimants shouldn't dare challenge the amount of benefit they get or the rules by which it is administered. Try asking an SS clerk for a WRITTEN EXPLANATION of how your Supplementary Pension is calculated and watch him evade your demand as best he can. You see, Claimants should be grateful for the miserable handouts they receive or that is how they would like us to be - cap in hand.

But don't be fooled by their CONFIDENCE TRICK. Nothing you tell them is ever kept secret for long. They will soon be on to the Housing Department or Social Services Department when your back is turned. If you forget to pay your rent, or electric bill, information about you will wizz from one Department to another. They will know before you if you take in a lodger, go into hospital or someone dies; especially if your file makes juicy reading.

But if you think they will tell you about the EXTRAS you can claim, or the most financially rewarding way of claiming, then forget it they are not on your side. If you are a wealthy person you can obtain the services of people who will help you arrange your affairs so that you pay the minimum of tax, and make the most profit out of any savings. But when you are poor, the only place you will get such advice is from your Local Claimants Union. Why should you be fiddled, cheated and robbed by the SS? Always ORGANISE TO CLAIM and NEVER MEET THE SS ALONE even in your own home.

MAKE SURE YOU ARE PART OF THE CLAIMANTS-UNION MOVEMENT.
.....

CLAIMANTS UNITE!



Claimants Unions are groups of people on social security who have got together to help each other and to fight collectively around the four demands known as the Claimants Charter.

CLAIMANTS CHARTER
the right to an adequate income without means test for all people.
a socialist society in which the necessities are provided and which is managed and controlled directly by the people.

no secrets and the right to full information.
no distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.

HAT THEY DO

There are three aspects to Claimants Union work:
fighting claims at labour exchanges, social security offices, appeal tribunals and sometimes through the courts.
political - producing literature such as the newspaper and booklets, also leaflets etc., organising demonstrations and socialist conferences, schools etc.
social - most CU members get a lot of support through the organisation of playgroups, food banks, squatting, trips and outings, the summer camp etc.

WHO IS A CLAIMANT

The 1966 Social Security Act labelled the receivers of Supplementary Benefits as 'claimants'. The National Federation of Claimants Unions uses the word to mean pensioners, sick, unemployed, single parents, low wage earners and strikers who are claiming or who have claimed Supplementary Benefits from the Department of Health and Social Security. People with incomes low enough to claim other means tested benefits such as free school dinners, rent rebates, rate rebates, family income supplement etc. may also be included.

What about NON-CLAIMANTS?

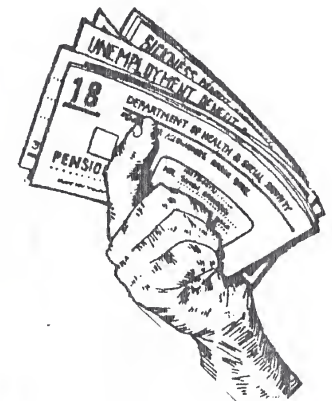
Non-claimants are not eligible for membership of bona-fide Claimants Unions. People who have not been claimants and are involved in fringe activities of Claimants Unions must be under the control of the membership. They should not be allowed to vote or take part in making decisions for that union. The main reason for this is the belief amongst claimants that if someone has not been through the process of claiming her/himself then s/he cannot fully understand what the Claimants movement is all about.

HOW THEY WORK

Each claimants union is self-governing and cannot be mandated outside the Charter. The essence of claimants unions is rank and file control which means that members make their own decisions at a local level at the weekly meetings of the union. Consequently, claimants unions are not branches of a national organisation and they differ in character and tactics. In doing so they reflect their individual localities, their particular communities and the personalities of their members. Different emphasis is placed from one union to another on the political, social and fighting claims aspects of CU work.

WEEKLY MEETINGS

Here all major decisions are taken collectively by the members present. Together we pool our knowledge, ideas and experience, and decide on future action. New members, who join at these meetings may be shocked at the lack of confidentiality and the friendly informality of the group. They may have come half expecting some sort of emergency social work organisation only interested in sorting their claim out. Instead we expect every member to get involved....no indispensable activists, no casework by specialists, no permanent experts, etc.



NATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CLAIMANTS UNION MOVEMENT

We have no national executive or national headquarters. We are in daily conflict with an enormous, centralised state bureaucracy i.e. the social security section of the Department of Health and Social Security. We want a movement which does not reflect this. A hierarchical structure with a national headquarters would mean discipline and regulation from above with the strong possibility of state cooption or control. Local unions would soon lose their spontaneity and militancy and power would be removed from the grass-roots. "Officials" in secure wellpaid posts would be far removed from the harsh realities of claiming, and would probably fall into the role of arbiters, conciliators and mediators.

START



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CLAIMANTS UNIONS

Is merely a network of all those claimants unions which have affiliated together. To affiliate, a claimants union must be bona-fide; support the four points of the Charter; and hold weekly meetings which are open to all claimants. The aim of the NFCU is to communicate and coordinate activities between claimants unions. To facilitate this there are regional and national

coordinating meetings, in addition to the quarterly National Federation meetings.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Castlemilk Claimants Union,
15 Dougrie Terrace, Castlemilk.
tel. 634-0819.
open Thursday/Friday, 2-5.



CLAIMANTS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

Claimants who have been refused their rights by Social Security often seek help from a social worker. Many social workers realising that supplementary benefits are not enough to live on advise people to join their local claimant's union and fight for higher benefits. Besides meaning that social workers have a lot less work to do, it also means that they can keep on good terms with the Social Security.

Often when social workers refer people to the CU they think of it as an advice agency and do not understand its true nature. They get upset if one of their clients is arrested for taking part in some collective action at the SS office. Some social workers think that it is enough for people to know their rights. This shows how much faith they have in the system, and how they fail to appreciate its discretionary nature.

Social workers are both friend and foe at the same time. But you must never forget that their primary task is to integrate us so as to enable the very system we are fighting to tick better.

Once or twice social workers who have been claimants have become involved in a CU and tried to run it like a casework organisation - approaching local SS managers, writing letters and making phone calls on behalf of the claimants.

We are totally opposed to this way of working and we suggest that sympathetic social workers

1) refuse to discuss confidential information about a claimant with the SS unless the claimant has consented. They should not collude with the SS staff or bargain over the claimant's head.

2) they should support all claimants unconditionally and refuse to make value judgements about deservingness and undeservingness.

3) they should refuse to administer any local authority means test and instead pay Section 12 money to claimants who are waiting for appeals against SS decisions to be heard.

4) explain to all claimants and fellow workers what a claimants union is and does. They should fight in their own organisation (BASW or NALGO) for a guaranteed adequate income for all without means test.

They should stick resolutely for changes and realise that more staff won't solve anything.

If you are one of the million and a half unemployed whose livelihood is being sacrificed in a futile effort to save our obsolete economic system, then you and your family have the right to an adequate income while you are out of work. So has every person and every family whose resources do not match their needs.

Under the 1976 Social Security Act, every person is entitled to an income to meet their needs by way of Social Security Benefits. In reality, these benefits only allow you to survive at starvation level ... if you can get them!

Recent research by Edinburgh University has shown that more than half those claiming Social Security Benefits have had them wrongly assessed. In October 1975, the DHSS admitted themselves that they knew that 1.5 million families and 690,000 pensioners were not getting the benefits they are entitled to.

This is not accidental. Most Social Security Offices DO know what they are doing when they refuse you your rights. Some do not understand their own regulations and some are just bloody-minded. For the most part, they are acting under instructions designed to humiliate and harrass you into dropping your claim - particularly if you are involved in industrial action. They are making YOU pay the price of our economic shambles.

ASK YOURSELF DO YOU KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND HOW TO GET THEM?

Here are some of the benefits you are entitled to from November 1977:

1 UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

This is due to you if you have made at least 26 national insurance payments (stamps) in the last contribution year, or if you have had these credited to you. Unemployment Benefit is based on a standard rate PLUS an earnings related supplement.

The current Standard Rates of Unemployment & Sickness Benefits are:-

Single Person	£14.70
Wife or other dependant adult	£ 9.10
Married woman	£10.50
First child	£ 3.50
Each other child	£3 00

MOST IMPORTANT

NEVER GO ALONE TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE, TAKE A FRIEND OF CLAIMANTS UNION REPRESENTATIVE.

2 SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT RATES NOVEMBER 1977 - NOVEMBER 1978

Couple	£23.55
Single householder	£14.50
Any other person aged -	
18 or over	£11.60
16-17	£ 8.90
13-15	£ 7.40
11-12	£ 6.10
5-10	£ 4.95
Under 5	£ 4.10

PLUS FULL RENT AND RATES (or £1.45 if you are living with parents in someone elses household)

PLUS OTHER LUMP SUM PAYMENTS FOR :-

Clothing and footwear	Gas and Electricity bills - if disconnection
Furniture and bedding	would cause hardship. (Refuse entry for
floor covering and curtains	disconnection until the DHSS have sorted
Re-decorating	out your case. APPEAL if they refuse to
Travelling expenses	help.
Funeral expenses	House repairs
Starting work tools and clothes	H P debts for essential items

ETC

ETC

ETC

ETC

ETC

ALL THE ABOVE WEEKLY AND LUMP SUM PAYMENTS HAVE TO BE ARGUED AND FOUGHT FOR.

THEY CAN BE OBTAINED - BUT GET ADVICE FIRST, IF POSSIBLE.

Remember, you will not get your rights simply by asking. You will first have to learn what they are - then how to fight to get them. Start by asking for a NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT (A124) from the Social Security Office. You have the right to demand this. This shows what they say you are getting and what they are taking off you. Check your benefits against the information on this leaflet. If you think you are not getting enough, and remember, the odds are that you won't be, contact your LOCAL CLAIMANTS UNION.

CONTACT BLACKHILL/PROVANMILL
CLAIMANTS UNION
COMMUNITY FLAT
GROUND LEFT

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
48 HOGGANFIELD STREET
BLACKHILL

OR YOUR NEAREST CLAIMANTS UNION

You don't need to have a problem to come to us. Come along and find out your rights.

Page Four...

CLAIMANTS' UNION MEMBERS MURDERED IN LABOUR PARTY REVENGE MASSACRE...

The Claimants' Union has hit what is known as an ongoing cash flow problem situation. Or, to put it another way, we are broke. We manage to incur very few expenses but of necessity we do have to: - purchase up to date literature about the latest changes as they affect claimants; make telephone calls (although most of them are to Heron House they may last upwards of half an hour at a time); letters have to be written and with postal charges as they are it doesn't take many letters to run up a fair sized debt.

To break down the above figures: We need to spend about a tenner on new books, procedures etc. The telephone bill has just arrived at the shop - £62 to pay, and I would guess between a quarter and a third of it could be put down to C.U. activity. It must be apparent that Pip and I do not have the world's most successful business. We do not mind giving our time but it seems ridiculous that we should have to finance the C.U. as well. Postage at the moment is no great problem as we have had some stamps donated.

Hastings Anarchist Group have offered a donation and we are hoping that the Association of Single Parents will do the same. The one group who are offering nothing at all is of course the Claimants themselves.

You may take this as either a warning or a threat, but unless we receive offers from people willing to give some cash and/or time to help, you can say goodbye to the Hastings Claimants' Union.

Mike Bloxham.

S.S. TURD

Anonymous SS Turd on the rampage. A Claimants Union Special about one Particular departmental shit.

Up London Road lies a state owned shipwreck beached long ago but never abandoned by its old crew insane with loyalty to its Captain 'Mr Man'.

This fossilized relic of the last war and now bleached white by the powerful Hastings sun (students on summer vacation take note) has become known by unemployed residents as 'SS Turds Anonymous'. Its final resting place is on a former local beauty spot.....Heron House.....Once worshipped for its outstanding scenic charm. Now the herons have long flown leaving only the beleaguered SS crew straining to withhold benefit from any claimant generally entitled to it.

There is an unfortunate rumour going around that 'SS Turds Anonymous' was once crewed by ex Nazi war criminals specifically to transport fleeing fascist comrades to Argentina or Brazil. Probably nothing of substance in this conjecture and the remaining skeleton crew will vehemently deny it.

But if they aren't SS war criminals then just who are these shipwrecks who shun from any public accountability, stow away and quietly pussyfoot about never revealing their identity whilst continually training their guns on potential new claimants.. Suspicions must remain when officers and crew so manifestly wish to stay anonymous. 'who are these guys?' as Butch said to Sundance. These bureaucrats 'with no name' can extract every intimate personal detail from the unemployed yet preserve the mystique around their own identification..

Even publically known senior officials on board refuse to yield in identifying any of their incognito deckhands acutely aware of a misguided first loyalty to their staff.

Anonymous remains the key watchword; witness the very name given to the vessel itself. Of course anonymity can give a definite edge to officials pathologically hounding clients and works to their advantage against other staff less squeamish about naming themselves.

However the 'named ones' must compensate and do so by having a strange affinity with old Clint Eastwood films. They watch his movies over and over rather like Nixon's repeated private viewing of the film 'Patton' while blasting neutral Cambodia with B 52's. So the repeated screening of spaghetti westerns concerning an unknown stranger go down well in the SS staff canteen though many find it hard not to choke on a sandwich when 'For a few dollars more' is shown. Sensitive ss nerves tend to jar on this one; after all paying out benefit comes pretty hard to most.

Yet from this motley crew one of the 'nameless ones' stands out like a sore thumb through sheer viciousness and insensitivity in her dealings with the unemployed. This particular unknown can only be physically described. (younger readers should skip the next few lines) She's female we believe, early thirties, dark and in very much need of a shave (there's a lot of facial hair under her nose).

Very recently the Claimants union was forced into direct contact with this unknown personage as she asked for deputy manager was at a staff meeting. This unknown had been instrumental in refusing benefit to a painter and decorator who'd resigned on after completing 4 weeks' decoration for a pensioner. He'd voluntarily come off social security to seek short term employment rather than continue receiving welfare benefit. But after re-signing on was told by this hairy faced female that 'hey presto' he'd now become 'self employed' which excluded him from further welfare support. He should have saved for future periods off work. The fact that this dark lipped bitch had clear evidence from his employer that he was only paid £1.50 an hour 6 hours a day, four days a week made no difference to her. For her he'd become metamorphosised from 'wage earner' into 'self employed' and in under going this transformation had cut himself off from future welfare assistance. So learn the lesson and don't volunteer for short term work.

After a heavy scene this facially disfigured monster disappeared into the bowels of 'SS Turds Anonymous' and the previously unavailable deputy manager arrived with file; immediately reversed her decision and then and there paid out back dated benefit over the counter.

A happy end...yet without his arrival this nameless moustached female would have wittingly sent away a legitimate claimant penniless and with half a packet of polos in his pocket. AS he said afterwards its ok. apinal loving neighbours feeding my two cats but I've been bloody hungry.

CLAIMANTS TRADE UNIONISTS

The Trades Union Congress is actively supporting the bosses by reaching agreement on a policy of wage restraint which effectively reduces our living standards. It colludes with big business interests in "ensuring peaceful plants and profitable enterprises in a stable economy". The TUC has consistently opposed

Claimants Union representation on local trades councils. The former chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, Lord Collison, was a reactionary trade union leader. There are two trade unionists on the SBC at present: Kenneth Griffin of the Electrical Trades Union, and Brenda Dean of SOGAT.

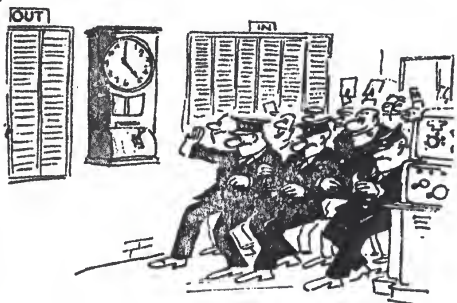
The majority of Claimants have never been in a trade union. The majority of the unemployed are semi-skilled or unskilled workers or school leavers.

The only time most Claimants come in contact with trade unionists is on opposite sides of the counter at local appeal tribunals, and at local SS offices where some counter clerks are in CPSA (Civil and Public Services Association).

Where do we go from here?

People seek and compete with each other for jobs. People put up with work which is alienating. People demand that the Labour Government create more jobs. People waste their lives clocking in and clocking out. **WHY?** People demand employment in order to obtain wages with which to pay the rent and electric, to buy food and clothing. But **THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS OF A CLASSLESS SOCIETY FREED FROM EMPLOYMENT.**

Being on the dole means poverty and insecurity; and employment offers some people an escape from this. But we should remember that poverty and insecurity also exists for millions of low paid workers who are even in trade unions like NUPE and NALGO. Many low paid workers are being faced with backdoor redundancies...being sacked for trivial reasons like arriving late or arguing with the foreman.



Is that well known picture from the '30s of a man in a cloth cap leaning dejectedly on a street corner depressed and dispirited because he hasn't got a job, or because he's been slaving away in a coal mine? Does he need a good dose of work to straighten his back...to make a 'man' of him?

Even with 1½ million 'signing on' the dole a person without a job is often referred to as a workshy, layabout scrounger. "Get yourself a job" is a term of abuse hurled at most Claimants - it is a feeling far more deeply entrenched in the working class than racial hatred. The capitalist press fosters both of these prejudices to divide the working class. The 'Left' speaks out against racialism, but seems ambivalent about denouncing the work ethic + wage slavery.

There is no lack of work in society. Millions of women do a hard day's work bringing up kids or looking after relatives and neighbours. We must question the nature of work/employment. Do we really want to waste our lives in useless work and neglect work which is important but 'unprofitable'? Do we really want to make profits for the bosses? Do we want to hammer on the door for re-admittance to the capitalist treadmill of wage slavery?

UNEMPLOYED?



The Claimants Union.

**A LIVING INCOME
JOB OR NO JOB**

Social Insecurity



fight back with the Claimants Union

Living on social security or any other state benefit is bloody hard. You don't need a leaflet to tell you that - but you do need something to tell you what your rights are because the social security or the bru never tell you everything you're entitled to.

Some people on social security or unemployment benefit have already got together to support each other and have formed themselves into Claimants Unions which is one way of sharing experiences and finding out what we're entitled to. But most important is that people in the Claimants Union actually get what they're entitled to from the social security. For example a couple in Maryhill Claimants Union got a clothing grant for £140.40p because they knew exactly what they could claim for. Another fella in Partick C. U. got his giro stolen but got the total amount re-issued the same day - he wouldn't have got it unless he knew his rights and had another C. U. member with him for support. That's a basic rule of the Claimants Union - NEVER MEET THE SOCIAL SECURITY ALONE - otherwise they'll tell you a pack of lies about not being entitled to replacement giros or Exceptional Needs Payments or anything else.



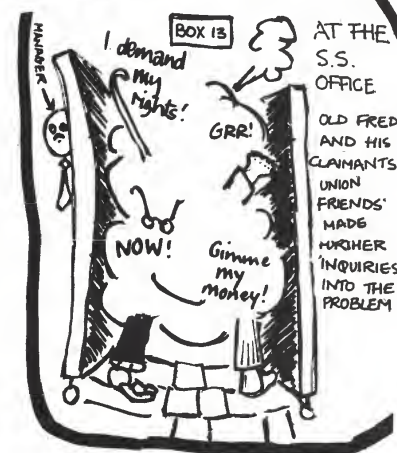
SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS

	Ordinary * Rate	Pensioners * (Long Term over 2 years)
SCALE RATES		
Couple	£25.25	£31.55
Single Householder	£15.55	£19.90
For any other Person**		
Aged 18 or over	£12.45	£15.95
Aged 16 to 17	£9.55	
For a Dependent Child		
Under 5	£4.40	
5-10	£5.30	
11-12	£6.55	
13-15	£7.95	

* There are higher rates for blind people and increased by 25p if a pensioner is 80 or over.

** For someone living in someone else's household a standard rent addition of £1.40 per week is normally made.

Rates of benefits are far too low, but that's something we're stuck with for just now. But what we're not stuck with is the lies and humiliations which the social security dish out to everyone who claims benefit. And there's only one way to get the better of the social security system - that's for claimants to get together and help each other, because if you try it on your own you'll get nowhere.



Home Visits

Some of the most gruelling interviews by the social security occur in the claimants' own homes. ALWAYS HAVE A FRIEND OR CLAIMANTS UNION MEMBER WITH YOU. The more people who the S. S. officer meets the better for the claimant.

Also, always demand at least 1 day's notice of any visit.

Don't let them look through your personal belongings either.

working out your supplementary benefit

A. SCALE RATES (ADULTS& ANY KIDS)
See front page for amounts

B. RENT ADDITION

Rent and rates in full
Mortgage - Interest & Insurance
Non - householders £1.45p

C. WEEKLY ADDITIONS

Laundry Addition
Central heating addition
Heating allowance 85p, £1.70 or
£2.55
Diet allowance (special foods for
old or sick people) ... 95p or £2.25

ADD UP A, B, & C HERE

D. OTHER BENEFITS

Child Benefit
Unemployment Benefit
Earnings Related Supplement
Pensions etc.

E. WEEKLY DEDUCTIONS

Fuel / Rent Direct
Industrial Misconduct
Voluntary & Compulsory "Savings"

F. OTHER INCOME

Part Time Earnings (ignore first £2)
(Ignore first £6 for single parent families)
Spouse's part time earnings (ignore £4)

ADD UP D, E & F HERE

TAKE D, E & F AWAY FROM
A , B & C

TOTAL

written explanations A124

The above total should represent the money you get from the S. S. each week. If you are getting less demand a written explanation (form A124) from the social security. It's surprising how often you get arrears by simply requesting one of these forms.

urgent need

According to Section 4 Part 1 of the 1976 Supplementary Benefit Act, "Nothing ... shall prevent the payment of supplementary benefit in an urgent case". This means that you can be paid 'over the counter' that day without an appointment if you are penniless or have had your money stolen.

WEEKLY ADDITIONS (ECAs) AND SPECIAL LUMP-SUM GRANTS

Lump sum grants, or exceptional needs payments (ENPs), may be paid for clothes, footwear, bedding, furniture, household equipment, removal expenses, redecoration, certain fares, starting work, fuel debts, rent arrears, HP debts, funeral expenses, home repairs, and other needs and emergencies. It is policy not to pay an ENP if a claimant can meet the expense out of savings of over £300.

There is no legal limit on how much can be paid for ECAs and ENPs.

Any claimant who is not satisfied with an ECA/ENP award, or who has been refused an award, has a right of appeal (see below).

APPEAL TRIBUNALS



APPEAL AGAINST ANY DECISION YOU DISAGREE WITH. But never go to the appeal alone or unprepared. They're never alone so always take friends or C. U. members along with you - you are allowed two with you at the tribunal. Travelling expenses and wages are refunded for you and your representatives.

Who Can Join The Claimants Union?

ANYONE CLAIMING STATE BENEFIT IS WELCOME TO JOIN THE CLAIMANTS UNION.

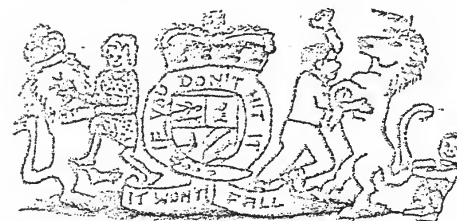
We stress the unity of all types of claimants - unemployed, single parents, pensioners, sick, strikers. We back up every member unconditionally with no regard to so called 'deservingness'. Ours is an offensive day to day battle for more money, and against intimidation, for young and old, male and female, black and white.

At first people come to claimants union meetings because they're not getting what they're entitled to and the S. S. treat them like dirt. And we give them all the help we can - practical! help not just sympathy. But we also hope that the same people will get involved in the running of their local C. U. There are no paid members in the C. U. 's - we all claim benefit but we do gain a lot of support and self-confidence through fighting the S. S. together.

TO JOIN THE CLAIMANTS UNION COME TO ANY OF THE MEETINGS ADVERTISED BELOW.

- Castlemilk C. U. 15 Dougrie Terrace tel. 634-0819
Hours Mon, Thurs, Frid. 10am-12noon & 2-4pm.
- Rutherglen C. U. MacDonald Centre Annexe, King St
Hours Tues. 2 - 4pm & Thurs 7-9pm.
- Blackhill & Provanmill C. U. Community Flat
43 Hogganfield St Hours Mon 2-4pm tel. 770-8633
- Hillhead/Partick C. U. at Money-Go-Round 29 Bank St.
Hours Thursday 2 - 3pm
- Drumchapel C. U. at Camus Place Centre
Airkeld Drive, Hours Wed. at 7.30 pm
- East End C. U. C/O Betty McGrattan tel 551 - 0872
25 Methven St. Lilybank, Tues. 7.30 newlands school

CLAIMANTS UNITE!



Claimants Unions are groups of people on social security who have got together to help each other and to fight collectively around the four demands known as the Claimants Charter.

THE CLAIMANTS CHARTER

1. the right to an adequate income without means test for all people.
2. a socialist society in which all necessities are provided free and which is managed and controlled directly by the people.
3. no secrets and the right to full information.
4. no distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.

WHAT THEY DO

There are three aspects to Claimants Union work:

1. fighting claims at labour exchanges, social security offices appeal tribunals and sometimes through the courts.
2. political - producing literature such as the newspaper and handbooks, also leaflets etc., organising demonstrations and specialist conferences, schools etc.
3. social - most CU members get a lot of support through the organisation of playgroups, food co-ops, squatting, trips and outings, the summer camp etc.

WHO IS A CLAIMANT

The 1966 Social Security Act labelled the receivers of Supplementary Benefits as 'claimants'. The National Federation of Claimants Unions uses the word to mean pensioners, sick, unemployed, single parents, low wage earners and strikers who are claiming or who have claimed Supplementary Benefits from the Department of Health and Social Security. People with incomes low enough to claim other means tested benefits such as free school dinners, rent rebates, rate rebates, family income supplement etc. may also be included.

What about NON-CLAIMANTS?

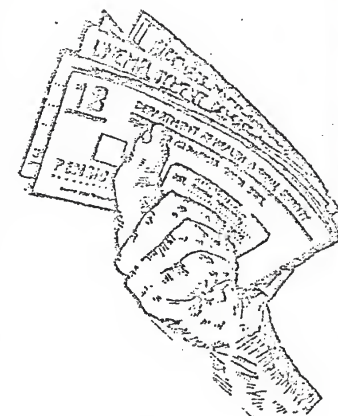
Non-claimants are not eligible for membership of bona-fide Claimants Unions. People who have not been claimants and are involved in fringe activities of Claimants Unions must be under the control of the membership. They should not be allowed to vote or take part in making decisions for that union. The main reason for this is the belief amongst claimants that if someone has not been through the process of claiming her/himself then s/he cannot fully understand what the Claimants movement is all about.

HOW THEY WORK

Each claimants union is self-governing and cannot be mandated outside the Charter. The essence of claimants unions is rank and file control which means that members make their own decisions at a local level at the weekly meetings of the union. Consequently, claimants unions are not branches of a national organization and they differ in character and tactics. In doing so they reflect their individual localities, their particular communities and the personalities of their members. Different emphasis is placed from one union to another on the political, social and fighting claims aspects of CU work.

WEEKLY MEETINGS

Here all major decisions are taken collectively by the members present. Together we pool our knowledge, ideas and experience, and decide on future action. New members, who join at these meetings may be shocked at the lack of confidentiality and the friendly informality of the group. They may have come half expecting some sort of emergency social work organization only interested in sorting their claim out. Instead we expect every member to get involved...no indispensable activists, no co-work by specialists, no permanent experts, etc.



NATIONAL PROSPECTS OF THE CLAIMANTS UNION MOVEMENT

We have no national executive or national headquarters. We are in daily conflict with an enormous, centralised state bureaucracy i.e. the social security section of the Department of Health and Social Security. We want a movement which does not reflect this. A hierarchical structure with a national headquarters would mean discipline and regulation from above with the strong possibility of state cooption or control. Local unions would soon lose their spontaneity and militancy and power would be removed from the grass-roots. "Officials" in secure wellpaid posts would be far removed from the harsh realities of claiming, and would probably fall into the role of arbiters, conciliators and mediators.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CLAIMANTS UNIONS

Is merely a network of all those claimants unions which have affiliated together. To affiliate, a claimants union must be bona-fide; support the four points of the Charter; and hold weekly meetings which are open to all claimants. The aim of the NCU is to communicate and coordinate activities between claimants unions. To facilitate this there are regional and national

coordinating meetings, in addition to the quarterly National Federation meetings.

JOIN THE GLASGOW CLAIMANT'S UNION

IT MEETS MOST THURSDAY NIGHTS IN THE ST. BRIDE'S CENTRE, 19/25 ROSEVALE ST. PARTICK, GLASGOW G11 from 7.30 to 9.00 p.m.



CLAIMANTS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

Claimants who have been refused their rights by Social Security often seek help from a social worker. Many social workers realising that supplementary benefits are not enough to live on advise people to join their local claimant's union and fight for higher benefits. Besides meaning that social workers have a lot less work to do, it also means that they can keep on good terms with the Social Security.

Often when social workers refer people to the CU they think of it as an advice agency and do not understand its true nature. They get upset if one of their clients is arrested for taking part in some collective action at the SS office. Some social workers think that it is enough for people to know their rights. This shows how much faith they have in the system, and how they fail to appreciate its discretionary nature.

Social workers are both friend and foe at the same time. But you must never forget that their primary task is to integrate us so as to enable the very system we are fighting to tick better.

Once or twice social workers who have been claimants have become involved in a CU and tried to run it like a casework organisation - approaching local SS managers, writing letters and making phone calls on behalf of the claimants.

We are totally opposed to this way of working and we suggest that sympathetic social workers

1) refuse to discuss confidential information about a claimant with the SS unless the claimant has consented. They should not collude with the SS staff or bargain over the claimant's head.

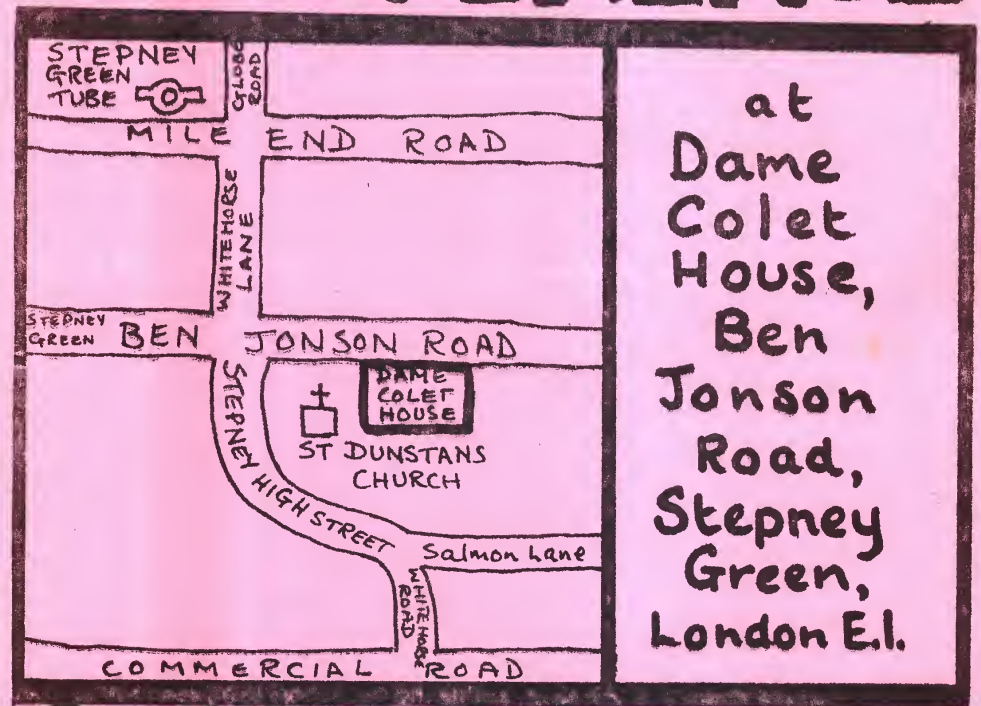
2) they should support all claimants unconditionally and refuse to make value judgements about deservingness and undeservingness.

3) they should refuse to administer any local authority means test and instead pay Section 12 money to claimants who are waiting for appeals against SS decisions to be heard.

4) explain to all claimants and fellow workers what a claimants union is and does. They should fight in their own organisation (BASW or NALGO) for a guaranteed adequate income for all without means test.

They should stick resolutely for changes and realise that more staff won't solve anything.

CLAIMANTS UNION CONFERENCE



Sat 12th + Sun 13th
JANUARY 1980

Castlemilk CLAIMANTS

Union and

Paper Group

Disco and Social

REMOVE
WAX EASILY

Sat 22ND NOV

7.30pm ONWARDS

SOCIAL WORK
DEPT. 15 DOUGRIE
TERR. CASTLEMILK
GLASGOW.

Where else
can you get it all?

NO ENTRY FEE
FREE FOOD • FREE BEER
BRING ANY OTHER DRINK YOU REQUIRE
TROUBLE-MAKERS AND
AGGRO WILL BE
DISCOURAGED

A full 12 months
GUARANTEE

FOR
FURTHER
DETAILS
CONTACT
CAROL AT
631-2148
OR DAVE AT
631-3570

ROCK ON

FORTNIGHTLY PAYMENTS AT EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES

The government has announced its intention to introduce fortnightly payments in all Employment Exchanges throughout the whole country in the near future. This has led to the CPSE taking industrial action on a national scale especially during the week of action 10th to 14th July this year.

The National Federation of Claimants Unions has stated its opposition to the introduction of this scheme. A press release was issued at the beginning of the CPSE week of action which out-lined the following points:

1. The unemployed will receive one week's money in arrears and one week in advance. This means that they will not receive their first payment for a week or more after a claim is made.
2. It will be more difficult to budget on a fortnightly basis. It is better to starve for the last two days of each week than for four days every fortnight.
3. If a giro is stolen or goes 'astray' a claimant has to wait twice as long until the next giro is due.
4. It will be more difficult to work out someone's benefit as the DHSS will still continue to calculate entitlement on a weekly basis.
5. It could be more difficult for claimants to cash their giro as amount of over £20 require some form of identification.
6. The DHSS has announced its intention to extend such payments to all claimants (single parents, pensioners etc.) if the government introduces this scheme.
7. The scheme, as proposed, actually states that the resulting staff savings (it will also reduce postal costs) will be "ploughed back to help prevent and detect fraud and abuse". (Dept of Employment 'Press Notice', 8th August, 1977)

We support the CPSE in its opposition to fortnightly payments. Of course, we are not against fortnightly signing on as this is hassle and expense for the unemployed although we are against any requirement to sign on. Although, the Claimants Union and the CPSE have announced their unified opposition to this scheme it is for somewhat different reasons:- the Claimants Union because we feel it will cause greater hardship to claimants-the CPSE because it threatens their jobs. On a more general level we are, of course, opposed to any cuts in public expenditure as this will inevitably mean a reduction in 'services' to claimants. It is probable that providing there are no over-all reduction in staff in Dole Offices the CPSE will not object to staff being re-deployed (as is proposed in the Supplementary Benefits Review). We would certainly be against any increase in staff in say Fraud Sections of Dole Offices...

Tony of North London.

ADDRESS LIST CONTINUED

ESSEX(Thurrock) Insert;

Thurrock CU,
22,FLEETHALL GROVE,
Thurrock,
Grays,Essex.

LONDON(Leytonstone) Insert ;John Primus,44,Dyers Hall Road,E11.

NCORTH DEVON(Barnstaple) Delete entry and comm's address and
replace by 'Possession',Chittlehampton,North Devon.TEL:027183 382.

BRISTOL(Withywood & Hartecliffe) The address,changed in the Jan
Bulletin is 'Hareclive Road'.Also,delete Comm's to and its address.

CORNWALL:Delete entry.

SOUTH DEVON(Newton Abbot) Insert Bill Jordan,8,Knowles Hill Rd
,Newton Abbot,South Devon.

CORNWALL(Penzance) Insert; West Penrith CU,
36,Polmere Road,
Trenearg Estate,
Penzance,Cornwall.

SHEFFIELD: Delete name and replace by Mrs Holden.

NEWCASTLE: Insert second contact Benwell Community Association,
85,Adelaide Terrace,Newcastle-in-Tyne 4.

CARDIFF: Insert Cardiff CU,
c/o Voluntary Community Services,
95,St Mary Street,
Cardiff. TEL: 0222 27625

BELFAST (Rathcoole,Newtonarbey)Derek Ray,Dept of Further Prof-
-essional Studies in Education,Queen's University,107,Botanic Av.

Belfast BF7 1NN TEL: 0232 45133 ext 3312.

BELFAST: Change existing entry to 'Belfast (Childrens Hosp)
add 'district' and also add 'Off Falls Road by Royal Belfast
Hospital for Children'.

LITERATURE AND INFORMATION SOURCES

1. CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP PUBLICATIONS:

National Welfare Rights Handbook, (75p incl. p&p), published by the Child Poverty Action Group, available from the Clydeside Poverty Action Group, 234 West Regent Street, Glasgow, or CPAG, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2.

Also, Poverty, published 3 times annually, (40p), and Poverty Reports covering various topics.

2. Supplementary Benefit Handbook, (65p), HMSO;

Supplementary Benefit Act, HMSO;

and other booklets such as Training of Staff, Exceptional Needs Payments, Living Together as Husband and Wife, Appeals, etc.

3. LEAFLETS (free) from:

DHSS
Information Division Leaflets Unit
Block 4
Government Buildings
Honeypot Lane
Stanmore
Middlesex.

(Ask for at least 5 of each).

4. KEEP LEAFLETS UP TO DATE by contacting:

DHSS
Information Division
Room 515
Alexander Fleming House
Elephant and Castle
London SE1.

and ask that they send you copies of all new and revised leaflets.

5. SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS COMMISSION:

Notes and News, (Quarterly), free from: The Editor, SBC Notes and News, New Court, Carey Street, London WC2A 2LS.

6. NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CLAIMANTS' UNIONS PUBLICATIONS, 134 Villa Rd., Birmingham B19 1NN.

7. OTHERS

Guide to Supplementary Benefits (Penguin)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CLAIMANTS UNIONS PUBLICATIONS **SEPT 78**
(except internal pubs)

	PRICE	C.U. DISCOUNT PRICE
C.U. GUIDEBOOK (Mostly out of print)	90p	35p
STRIKERS HANDBOOK ISBN 095026704X	35p	10p
FIGHT TO LIVE (unemployed H'book) ISBN 0950267082	55p	25p
WOMEN & SOCIAL SECURITY ISBN 095267090	60p	30p
CLAIMANTS UNITE ISSN 0309-5576		
Nos 1-6	20p	10p
Nos 7-12	20p	5p
No 13 (Dosser Special)	40p	10p
No 14,	20p	5p
No 15	26p	5p
A GUARANTEED MINIMUM INCOME (CU report to TUC) <i>(Com)</i>	55p	20p
C.U. BADGE	15p	10p
COHABITATION BADGE (Smash the Cohabitation Rule)	25p	18p
KEY FOBS (Printed C.U. symbol & BCU 10th Anniversary)	30p	26p
POSTER (From Midlands only) "Higher Benefits, Stop deductions of family allowance, pay long -term rate to unemployed after 6 months"	Postage only	£1-13 £3.50 = 50 £6.50 = 100 £1-7 £5 = 40 £10 = 100 Bulk prices on request. 100 can be done to your own design or wording.
OTHER Various regional centres stock other publications such as stickers.		

STRIKERS LEAFLETS

£10 per 1000 & pro rata
post free.

To Trade Unions & Strikers these can be provided free, especially
in emergencies, if the requester will undertake to raise
the question of a donation to our work, with the Branch, Committee
or whatever at an appropriate time.

POSTAGES & PACKING

First Item 15p
Each item after that 7p
"UNITE" = 1/2 an item
13 Badges = 1 item

NFCU PUBLICATIONS CENTRES All publications sold from 8 Regional Centres

MIDLANDS & INTERNATIONAL
134 Villa Road
BIRMINGHAM
B19 1NN
England

NORTH OF THAMES
Dame Colet House,
Ben Jonson Road,
London E1 3NH

SOUTH, SOUTH-WEST, NORTH-WEST, WALES, NORTH & SCOTTISH REGIONS : see over.
(Camberwell, Bristol, Manchester, Swansea, South Shields, Glasgow)

NORWICH Claimants UNION



The comeback of poverty

WHAT WE DO

Poverty is not unknown to many claimants and a quick glance at the scales opposite confirm this. However the Norwich Claimants Union exists to combat both the isolation felt by many claimants and redress the 'administrative errors' continually occurring to claimants. Simply giving the knowledge is easy enough but having the confidence to confront the bureaucracy is quite another.

At our weekly meetings we pass on the knowledge and through self-help prompt claimants resistance to the indignities suffered whilst pursuing our legitimate rights as claimants.

Current Supplementary Benefit Rates

Ordinary scale	Ordinary rate £	Long term* rate £
Husband and wife	25.25	31.55
Single householder	15.55	19.90
Any other person aged:		
18 or over	12.45	15.95
16-17	9.55	9.55
13-15	7.95	7.95
11-12	6.55	6.55
5-10	5.30	5.30
under 5	4.40	4.40

Blind scale	Ordinary rate £	Long term* rate £
Husband and wife		
If one of them is blind	26.50	32.80
If both of them are blind	27.30	33.60
Any other blind person aged:		
18 or over	16.80	21.15
16-17	10.45	10.45

*Where the claimant or a dependant is aged 80 or over a further 25p is added to these long term rates. On top of these rates claimants get: an addition for housing costs, possibly extra for heating, etc. minus some of the income they have already.
from: 'National Welfare Benefits Handbook', Child Poverty Action Group, 70p.

JOIN US

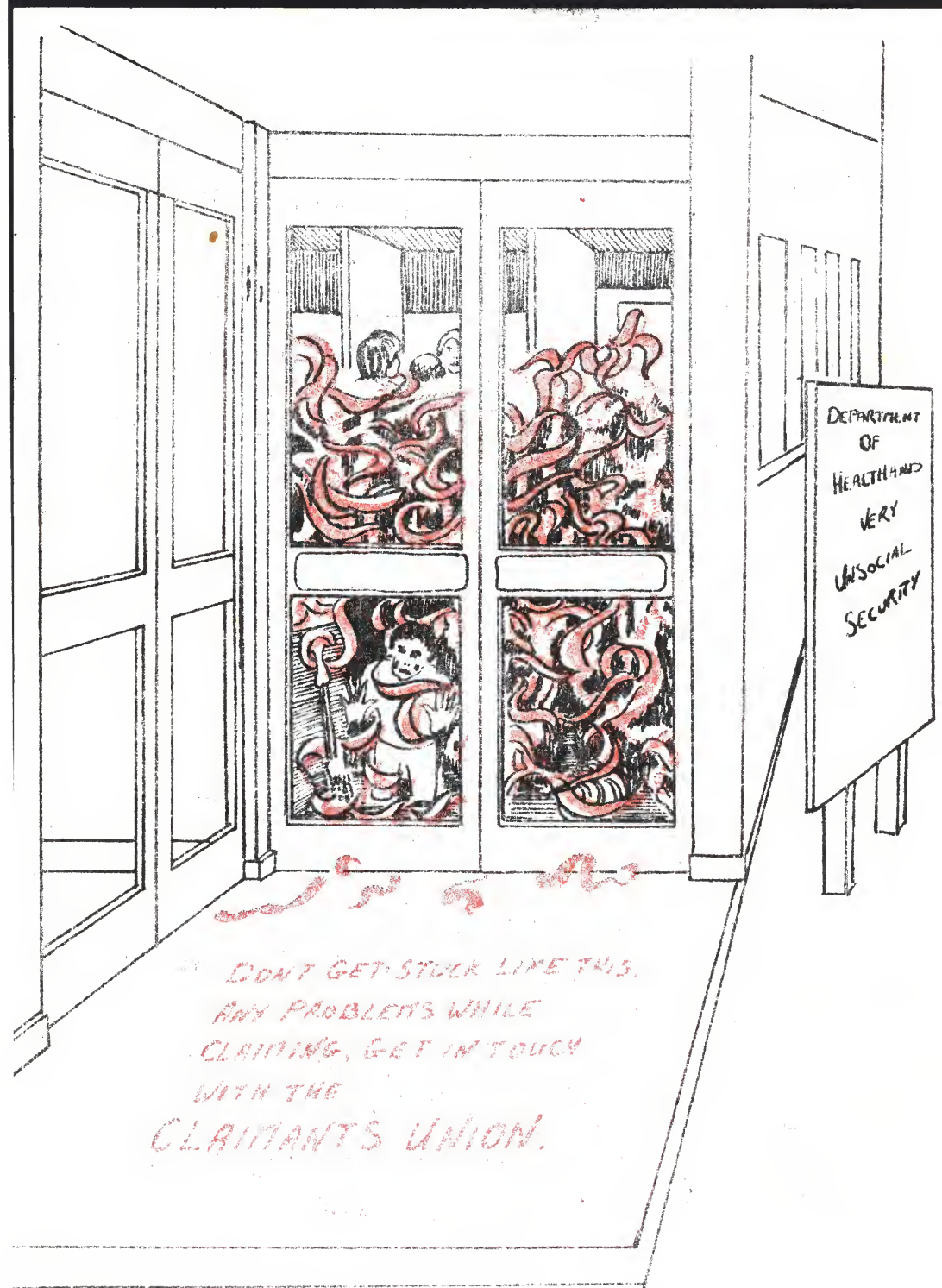
UNITY IS STRENGTH :

Claimants need to resist the attacks on their already pathetic incomes.

Meet other Claimants

EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 72 CLARENDON

ROAD, AT 12 NOON ONWARDS.



THE CLAIMANTS' UNION GUIDE TO A FIGHTBACK AGAINST DWINDLING WELFARE RIGHTS.

Don't let the S.S. grind you down.

Signing on Welfare can be a 'degradation ceremony'. Is this deliberate state policy?

Calling in at Heron House means waiting about...often seemingly endlessly. It can mean a whole day out. So come prepared. A packed lunch or tea isn't amiss. Because coffee won't be served. Even if you are Thatcher's shock troops in her mock inflation battle.

Delay can be or appear deliberate to intimidate and discourage claims. So keep buzzing the counter enquiry clerk. Don't be fobbed off by a dismissive counter clerk (their low pay can create resentment against 'state handouts!'). In the eyes of every counter clerk all claimants are potentially inveterate liars. Don't bother to win counter clerk trust. Demand to see the manager or his deputy. THIS is your right.

Never enter Heron House alone. Bring a friend or companion, particularly at interviews. They can act as witnesses and corroborate harassment. You have the right to be accompanied.

Don't let the S.S. humiliate you by harassment, victimisation or threat to suspend or restrict benefit. There is a complaints procedure. Write your complaint to Regional Office. Address your complaint to: D.H.S.S. Regional Office,
Sutherland House,
29-37 Brighton Road,
Sutton,
Surrey.

No harm comes from writing to your local M.P. All complaints are checked. This can bring discomfiture and embarrassment to Heron House. Mistakes are rectified. It isn't a total waste of time.

Since the 1980 Social Security Act many old past Welfare entitlements have been axed.

In bankrupt Britain the S.S. fraud squad is one new growth industry.

If any claim is refused APPEAL against it.

This is your inalienable right.

Ask for an appeal form at the counter, and an appeal tribunal will be automatically set up. This costs the department and can bring an immediate decision reversal to your benefit.

Appeal against everything.

And keep on appealing.

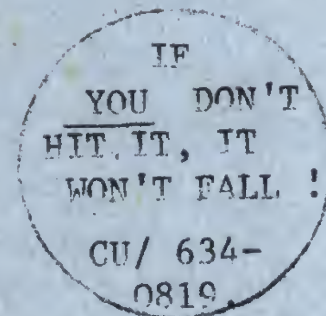
One benefit from the 1980 Act: the S.S. will now pay a deposit and rent in advance for a new flat or bedsitter.

Make sure they honour this obligation.

For further information and help, contact your nearest Claimants' Union. Hastings C.U. can be reached on Hastings 434102 at 14 Silchester Rd, St. Leonards-on-Sea. Sussex.

KEEP FIGHTING

CLAIMANTS UNION



WHO ARE WE ?

The claimants and unemployed workers union has been formed by ordinary claimants. We are fed up with the social security system (S S) like everybody who is exposed to their wheelings and dealings BUT that alone is not enough. We know that the S.S. only concedes our claims & appeals if we show we have enough determination and knowledge to win them. For claimants, and working people generally, UNITY is strength and the S.S. knows this only too well and acts to discourage claimants getting together to mutually support each other. Instead of going it alone to the S.S. the claimants union provides the necessary information & support which can tip the scales in OUR favour (for a change !)

WHOSE BENEFIT ?

The "Welfare state" is supposed to be for the benefit of workers - whether in work or not. However, it is obvious that this is not the case - and its nowhere more obvious than when YOU are a claimant.

Such is the way the "welfare" State operates that people come to the Claimants Union expecting some kind of trained Social Worker to "deal" with their case.

This is NOT the way the C.U. organises. We are ordinary claimants ourselves and have no wish to "help" people towards being DEPENDENT on others. Our idea is for people to receive support from the Claimants Union, learn how the

system works against us & actively help other claimants to understand & organise in a similar fashion. We are not a bunch of leaders or experts, the more people that know HOW to fight the system for their benefit the better & the State won't be able to say "there is millions of unclaimed benefit this year" in one ear & "claimants are scroungers" in the other. They'll have to listen to us for a change.

ACTION The CUs leaflet, fight appeals, provide information on Rights, organise jumble sales, link up with other CUs.

CU CHARTER

- 1/ The right to an adequate income without means test for all people.
- 2/ A socialist society in which all necessities are provided free and which is managed & controlled directly by the people.
- 3/ No secrets & the right to full information.
- 4/ No distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.

CLAIMANTS UNION MEETINGS:-

HILLHEAD/PARTICK:

Meets every thursday between 1.30 & 3.30 at "Money-go-round" a shop at 27 Bank St.

For claimants in other areas (DUNMCHAPEL, MARYHILL, LILYBANK, RUCHAZIE, GOVAN etc) contact Castlemilk either by phone/letter.

~~MONTHLY All-Glasgow CU meetings(634-0819).~~

CASTLEMILK:

tel. 634-0819 - open every morning and some afternoons. Weekly CU meeting thursday night @ 7pm. For the moment based at the the COMMUNITY ROOM, 15 Dougrie Terrace in the S.W. Department. For RUTHERGLEN CU contact Castlemilk.

CLAIMANTS UNION

READY RECKONER.

IF
YOU DON'T
HIT IT, IT
WON'T FALL.
CU/ tel.634-
0819.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW YOUR SUPPLEMENTARY
BENEFIT IS WORKED OUT ? THEN DO THIS
SIMPLE SUM-----

First: you will be entitled to one of the
following weekly amounts:

SINGLE HOUSEHOLDER.....£14.50
COUPLE.....£23.55
PERSON OVER 18 LIVING IN
SOMEONE ELSE'S HOUSEHOLD.£11.60

WRITE IT HERE.....

NEXT: Add on the following amounts for
any dependent children.

EACH CHILD AGED 16-17....£8.90
13-15....£7.40
11-12....£6.10
5-10....£4.95
under 5.....£4.10

WRITE IT HERE.....

If you are a pensioner, or have been rec-
eiving Supp.Ben. continuously for 2 years

/Continued next column....

you should get the Long Term Addition:

SINGLE HOUSEHOLDER....£3.40
COUPLE.....£4.80
PERSON OVER 18, LIVING
IN SOMEONE ELSE'S HOUSEHOLD
.....£2.75

WRITE IT HERE.....

THEN ADD YOUR WEEKLY RENT & RATES IN FULL:

if you have a mortgage, add the weekly mort-
gage interest plus insurance, repairs etc.

If you live in someone else's household,
add £1.45

WRITE IT HERE.....

ADD THE ABOVE TOTALS

NOW TAKE AWAY:

family allowance....tax rebate(if weekly)
maintenance payments.....Sick pay.....
wife's earnings above £4/wk....Retirement
any part-time earnings £4 plus pension...

click on WRITE IT HERE.....

WHAT'S LEFT YOU SHOULD GET.

7

42

ADVAIS DEMAND A WRITTEN EXPLANATION OF HOW YOUR BENEFIT IS WORKED OUT. Ask for an assessment form (A124). The SS have to provide these since you can easily check their assessment and find fault with their calculations. It is surprising how many Claimants get more money and arrears simply by demanding one of these.

If you are refused a written explanation, or merely given a verbal one, complain to the Regional SS office or to the SBC HQ. It has actually been admitted by a past chairman of the SBC that 1 in 10 of all claims are worked out wrong which means one hell of a lot of people stand to gain just asking for an A 124 in cases of negligence alone.

NEVER MEET THE SS ALONE AND APPEAL AGAINST ANY DECISION YOU DISAGREE WITH:-- Being a claimant is a full-time job. As a Claimant these are two rules to remember. When you first become a Claimant and meet the SS you soon learn the wisdom of these rules. They never meet YOU alone - they are always backed up by the whole weight of their bureaucratic procedures, followed closely behind by the forces of repression and coercion, from the police and the law to the social services departments of the Council. They have the money and 'they' have the powers to decide whether you 'deserve' it. Therefore, they have complete control over your life unless you fight back, and the only effective way to fight back is together as a group. Alone they will lie, cheat and abuse you, and you will be unable to do anything to stop them. Always have someone to back you up and act as a witness. Another usefull rule is to keep dated copies of everything you write to them and notes of anything you tell them. They keep a file on you - do the same to them; When you first become a claimant, this is what happens and how to fight back.

SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS * SKELETON SCALE RATES

BASIC SCALE RATES from November '77. short term long term

Householders

Couple.....	£20.65	£24.65
Single.....	£12.70	£15.70

Non Householders

Single (over 18).....	£10.15	£12.60
(16 - 17).....	£7.80	

Children

13 - 15.....	£6.50
11 - 12.....	£5.35
5 - 10.....	£4.35
Under 5.....	£3.60

PLUS A REENT ADJUSTION

1. Rent and rates in full.
2. Mortgage interest, plus an amount for insurance and repairs, etc
3. Rent allowance if you are a non-householder...£11.20

FULL BOARD AND LODGING

An amount of up to £18 a week per adult (depending on area), plus an allowance for "pocket money" of £4.10
There are many things you can claim on the SS, too many to list here, but this will give you a rough idea of whether or not you are getting your due...

REMEMBER:

POSSIL CLAIMANTS UNION

42 ALLANDER STREET.

EVERY THURSDAY AT 2 p.m.

Come to meet you there, good luck and remember "if it's worth having, it's worth fighting for !!!

GLASGOW PEOPLE'S PRESS AND POSSIL POST WILL BE DOING REGULAR ARTICLES ON CLAIMANTS MATTERS, BOTH WELCOME ARTICLES FROM YOU

POSSIL CLAIMANTS UNION STARTED ON 10th AUGUST '77, we are a new group and we are fighting fit as the buroo and the SS are about to find out, lets get into them together !!!

ARE YOU ON THE DOING ?

COME
AND
JOIN
THE
POSSIBLE
CLAIMANTS
UNION

A CLAIMANTS UNION is :- a group of people on social security who have got to join to help each other and to fight collectively against the four demands known as the Claimants Charter.

THE CLAIMANTS CHARTER:

1. The right to an adequate income without means test for all people.
2. A socialist society in which all necessities are provided free and which is managed and controlled by the people.
3. No secrets and the right to full information.
4. No distinction between deserving and 'undeserving'.

HOW DOES THE C.U. WORK ?

Each Claimants Union is self-governing and cannot be mandated outside the Charter. The essence of C.U.'s is grass root control which means that members make their own decisions at a local level at the weekly meetings of the union. Consequently, C.U.'s are not branches of a national organisation and they differ in character and tactics. In doing so they reflect their individual localities, their particular communities, and the personalities of their members. Different emphasis is placed from one Union to another on the political, social and fighting claims aspects of C.U. work.

THERE ARE FOUR MAIN ASPECTS OF CLAIMANTS UNION ORK:

1. Fighting claims at labour exchanges, social security offices, appeals tribunals and sometimes the courts.
2. Political - producing literature such as the Claimants Paper and Handbooks, also leaflets etc., organising demonstrations and specialist conferences, schools etc.
3. Industrial - We extend our knowledge, experience and ideas of fighting the Dole and SS to workers struggles in industry - we believe in the unity of working class people, whether in or out of work. Our interests are the same, in that we are fighting to control our own lives.
4. Social - most CU members get a lot of support through the organisation of playgroups, food co-ops, trips and outings, the summer camp etc.

WEEKLY MEETINGS:

Here all major decisions are taken collectively by the members present. Together we pool our knowledge, ideas and experience, and decide on future action. New members, who join at these meetings may be shocked at the lack of secrecy and by the friendly atmosphere of the group. They may have come half expecting some sort of emergency social work organisation, only interested in sorting out their claim out. Instead we expect every member to get involved...no indispensable activists, no 'casework' by specialists, no permanent experts, etc.

NEVER MEET THE SS ALONE.

* TOMORROW morning, when the offices open, the renaming of the Board will be backed up by a new, official phraseology. The officers, who have dealt for years with "applicants" who may succeed in becoming "clients" are becoming used to referring to everyone they deal with as "claimants". What it means in the simplest terms, says one manager, "is that the customer is always right."

SUNDAY TIMES (NOVEMBER '66)

GLASGOW CLAIMANTS & UNEMPLOYED WORKERS UNION
HILLHEAD & PARTICK BRANCH, c/o 22, BANK STREET, HILLHEAD, G12.

This leaflet has been produced by the burs of the Claimants & Unemployed Workers Union. These are groups of people on Social Security and Unemployment Benefit who have got together to help each other and to fight collectively around the 4 demands known as the Claimants Charter.

CLAIMANTS CHARTER:-

1. The right to an adequate income without means test for all people.
2. A socialist society in which all necessities are provided free and which is managed and controlled directly by the people.
3. No secrets and the right to full information.
4. No distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.

We are not unpaid social workers or 'do-gooders', but a militant organisation fighting together to better our standard of living. The Labour Exchange & Social Security have a great number of rules which prevent you from getting enough to live on. These rules are designed specifically to make your life as difficult as possible.

Few people receiving Supplementary Benefit are aware of exactly WHAT their rights are under the 1976 Act. Here is a brief rundown of information you should know.

	Ordinary weekly rate	Long term weekly rate	Weekly rate (over 80)
Married couple.....	£23.55	£28.35	£28.60
Single householder.....	£14.50	£17.96	£18.15
<u>For any other person</u>			
Aged 18 or over.....	£11.60	£14.35	£14.60
Aged 16 to 17.....	£8.90		
<u>For each dependant child</u>			
Aged 13 to 15.....	£7.40	Aged 16 or over and still at school.....	
Aged 11 to 12.....	£6.10		£8.90..
Aged 5 to 10.....	£4.95		
Aged under 5.....	£4.10		
<u>For blind people</u>			
Married couple (one blind)...	£24.80	£29.60	£29.85
Married couple (both blind)...	£25.66	£30.40	£30.65
Single person (18 or over)...	£15.75	£19.15	£19.40
Single person (16 to 17).....	£ 9.80		

Attendance requirements

Attendance needed day and night.....	£14.00
Attendance needed day or night.....	£ 9.30

If after checking this against your income you find or suspect that you are being underpaid, you can write to your local office and that ASSESSMENT FORM A.I.2.4. Be sent to you. This is similar to a wage slip and will give you a detailed account of how your money is made up, i.e. yourself, wife, children, rent, extra fuel allowance, special diet allowance, etc.

JOIN
YOUR
LOCAL
CU!

HILLHEAD/PARTICK: THURSDAYS between 1.30 & 3.30pm at "Money-go-round", 27 Bank St., every week.
CASTLEMILK: tel. 634-0819, contact daily every morning at Community Room, 54 Dent., 15 Dougrie Terrace & Thursday nights.
 For contacts in other areas (RUTHERGLENN, MARYHILL, DRUMCHAPPEL, DUNCHAZIE, GOVAN, LILYBANK, etc) telephone/write to Castlemilk CU.
 MONTHLY meetings of the GLASGOW CLAIMANTS UNIONS.
 REMEMBER! if you don't hit it, it won't fall.

Many people receiving Rent & Rates rebate would be better on Supplementary Benefit, Being on Rent & Rates rebate disqualifies you from a whole range of Supplementary Benefits. To calculate your weekly rent & rates exactly you have to multiply your monthly rent & rates by 12 then divide by 52. CHECK FIRST.

EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS PAYMENTS (ENP's)

One of the most important sections in the Supplementary Benefits Act is the one dealing with 'Exceptional Needs'. Section 4 (Urgent Needs) of the 1976 Act. This applies to cases of overriding urgency, and allows the SB to make payments, or part payments to claimants OVER THE COUNTER. This section also applies to workers on strike. A striker may claim for benefit for his family only, not himself.

SECTION 3(1) of the 1976 Act allows the SB to make a lump sum payment to cover an exceptional need or meet an expense not covered by the weekly allowance. When making a claim under this section, make sure that you name it in your statement. For example: 'I wish to claim under section 3(1) of the 1976 Act., for an exceptional needs grant to cover the following.....' When making this claim you don't have to go to the office, simply drop them a line stating that you wish to make such a claim.

This section also covers the following:-

Clothing & footwear, beds & bedding, pots & pans & cutlery, fireside chairs/ 3 piece suite, wardrobes, sideboards, chest of drawers, table & chairs, kitchen cabinet, curtains, linoleum, carpets, fireguards, and all OTHER ITEMS OF ESSENTIAL HOUSEHOLD GOODS!
Removal expenses, redecoration & repairs, expenses used in visiting a relative in prison, or hospital, fuel debts & rent arrears, essential U.N. debts, funeral expenses, telephone, and clothing & tools needed to start work, furniture storage, fires and cookers and ANYTHING ELSE YOU CAN THINK OF!

One thing should be remembered when dealing with the SB. NEVER MEET THEM ALONE ALWAYS take a friend or representative with you. If they plan to visit your home, MAKE SURE YOU GET 24 HOURS WRITTEN NOTICE of the visit, this is your RIGHT, so make sure they do it. DON'T be fooled by an officer if you are told that you do not qualify for something. IN MANY CASES the officer visiting you DOES NOT KNOW WHAT YOU ARE ENTITLED TO. Also, all payments and grants are discretionary. This means that it is at the DISCRETION of the officer interviewing you whether or not your claim is successful. HE IS THE ONE WHO MAKES THE DECISION. - NEVER take NO for an answer, ALWAYS APPEAL. Appeal against any decision which has been made against you. In many cases they will change their minds straight away. And if they don't, then there is more than a chance that you will win your appeal.

AT THE APPEAL..... NEVER GO ALONE AND UNPREPARED. Keep a copy of your appeal and don't forget to put a date on it. You are allowed 2 friends or representatives with you and you can call as many witnesses as you want. All expenses are refunded by the tribunal, whether you win or lose, so if you have found a job, or one or both of your friends/witnesses are working, then travelling expenses & loss of wages are refunded.

CLAIMANTS UNION GUIDE TO THE NEW SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT RATES

The Claimants Union is a group of people on social security who come together to help each other make claims at S.S. offices, present appeals and fight collectively around the four demands of the claimants charter:

1. The right to an adequate income, without means test for all people
2. A socialist society in which all necessities are provided free, and which is managed and controlled by the people.
3. No secrets and the right to full information.
4. No distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving' cases.

NEW RATES OF SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT, FROM NOVEMBER '77.

<u>HOUSEHOLDERS:</u>	COUPLE:	short term.....	£23.55
		long term.....	£28.35
	SINGLE:	short term.....	£14.50
		long term.....	£17.00
<u>NON-HOUSEHOLDERS:</u>			
	OVER 18	short term.....	£11.60
		long term.....	£17.00
	16-17.....		£9.00
<u>NON-HOUSEHOLDERS ALLOWANCE</u>			
£1.45			
<u>CHILDREN:</u>	13-15.....		£7.40
	11-12.....		£6.10
	5-10.....		£4.00
	under 5.....		£4.10

From the 14th of November everyone claiming supplementary benefit should have received these increases. The increases are of course totally inadequate and do little to bring the basic scale rates above subsistence level. When you're on the SS you don't live - you exist. The Claimants Union demands a guaranteed income, linked to the cost of living index, for everyone, whether in employment or not.

At the moment the S.S. benefits are deliberately kept at a low level in order to force claimants to accept low paid work (often in non-unionised firms). They have special officers (unemployment review officers) whose job is to force claimants into jobs - any jobs - by intimidating threats, dufling benefit - and prosecution!!!

If, after looking at these rates, you suspect you are being underpaid, you should write to your local DHSS office and ask them to send you an ASSESSMENT FORM A124. This form is similar to a wage slip and gives you details of how your benefit is made up.

URGENT NEEDS.

One of the most important sections of the act is the bit on 'Urgent needs'. Section 4 of the 1976 supplementary benefit act makes provision for the DHSS to make payments OVER THE COUNTER in cases of urgent need. This section also applies to workers on strike.

EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS.

Section 3 of the act allows the DHSS to make a lump sum payment to cover an exceptional need, or to meet an expense not covered by the weekly payment. When making a claim under this section, quote the 1976 act, for example, "I wish to claim under Section 3(1) the following...."

If they're going to visit your home demand 24 hours notice - your RIGHT.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CLAIMANTS UNION:

MARYHILL: Meets every Wednesday at 2pm in the Community Central Halls, 304 Maryhill Road.
GOVAN: Meets 1-3pm Wednesdays, Govan area resource centre, Lanlands rd..
POSSIL: Meets 2pm, Thursdays, 42 Allender St., community flat (336-4437).
HILLHEAD: PARTICK - CASTLEWILK; EAST END; contact POSSIL for details.
PUBLISHED GLASGOW FEDERATION OF CLAIMANTS UNIONS (FORTNIGHTLY MEETINGS).

S C R E W T H E R E V I E W !

At the moment, the Supplementary Benefits Commission are considering a REVIEW which proposes changes in the present Supplementary Benefit Scheme. Believe it or not, if these changes go through it will mean an even HARDER life for claimants.

SOME OF THE CHANGES THEY WANT

- ** They want a drastic reduction in cash grants (Exceptional Needs Payments), which means:
 - No Help With Fuel Bills
 - No Responsibility On Social Security To Help With Money For Clothing And Footwear
 - If They Did Choose To Help, They Could Grant £2 For A Pair Of Shoes And There Is Nothing You Could Do About It.
- ** If anybody gets an increase in money, it will be at the expense of somebody else.
- ** Additions for people needing special diets would be abolished, and heating additions would be restricted - no matter how High heating costs Actually Were. These cuts are particularly hard on disabled people and are part of an attempt to avoid dealing with disabled peoples needs. There is also a suggestion that the addition for Blind People be Abolished.
- ** Women will still be treated Unequally despite the Sex Discrimination Act. Despite the proposed "Nominated Breadwinner" Policy, women will continue to be regarded as mere Dependants of men!
- ** Life will be more difficult for people on short term benefit since they would have to apply once for the short term benefit and then again for the full benefit. This means twice as many interviews, twice as many forms to fill, etc...and twice the Confusion!
- ** And if you happen to disagree about your claim...Too Bad! because they also propose to restrict your Right Of Appeal against their decisions!

Clearly these proposed changes are not suggested in consideration of claimants interests. While big business, politicians, and top officials income grows, the unemployed, sick, and pensioners are expected to 'Tighten Their Belts' another couple of notches.

.../

At the moment, these are only proposals - they have not (yet) been passed. The Supplementary Benefit Commission held Conferences at which "Members of the Public" gave their views on the proposals. The Carefully Selected and Specially Invited Participants included;

DHSS MANAGEMENT !
 DHSS STAFF !
 SOCIAL WORKERS !
 COUNCIL OFFICIALS !
 HOUSING OFFICIALS !
 UNIVERSITY LECTURERS !

Because of this, Glasgow Claimants Union wrote to Ennals (Minister for Health and Social Security) asking him to arrange a conference for Claimants Only - as it is Our Lives they are discussing. Despite all their Crap about "OPEN GOVERNMENT" etc., the answer was a Big Fat Zero...NO!

In other words the only people who are going to look after claimants are the Claimants Themselves!

SO JOIN THE CLAIMANTS UNION NOW, AND SCREW THE REVIEW...BEFORE IT SCREWS YOU!

WHAT IS THE CLAIMANTS UNION?

When we are at work, the only way we get anywhere is by organising for our rights. When we are employed, we need a Trade Union, now that we are unemployed, we need a Claimants Union - it's common sense!

In other words, we have more chance of getting our rights by fighting collectively.

For details of your nearest Claimants Union, or for help and advice in starting a Claimants Union in your area, contact:

CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION
 C/O SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
 15 DOUGRIE TERRACE
 CASTLEMILK
 GLASGOW

TELEPHONE: 634-0819

REMEMBER.....UNITY IS STRENGTH

CLAIMANTS UNION
GUIDE TO SURVIVAL

WRITTEN DECISION IF YOU ARE REFUSED BENEFIT ETC.

If you are refused your benefits from the S.S., or if they refuse a payment for an exceptional need for clothing or any other items you or your family need, make sure they give you a written refusal.

Since Social Security is based on a means test, this means you will have given a lot of details about your private circumstances to prove your claim, so if they refuse you, make sure you get their decision in writing.

POINTS TO WATCH

According to the Supplementary Benefits General Regulations 1977, the Social Security are no longer required to issue a written decision about a claim unless specifically requested.

This means if you complain about the way you have been kept waiting, the S.S. can say they gave you an oral refusal, but nothing in writing. Given the way the S.S. cheat and abuse the claimants, you should be on your guard. Always ask for a written decision.

CLAIMANTS UNION SCOTTISH REGION
APPLICATION FOR WRITTEN DECISION

The Manager,
D.H.S.S. (S.B.),

Write clearly local office address

Dear Sir,

SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS GENERAL REGULATIONS 1977 (No. 1141)
PARAGRAPH 12, SUB-PARAGRAPH 3.

Please supply me with a written decision regarding my recent application
for _____

State clearly
exactly what you
asked for -
Heating Allowance/
Clothing Grant/
Diet Allowance/
etc., etc.

Signed _____

Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss

Address: _____

Date: _____

It is important that you write clearly. You may need this information
if you are going to complain about how you have been treated by the
local office, or at an appeal.

ONE COPY TO BE KEPT BY CLAIMANT.

CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS

HAVING PROBLEMS WITH THE D.H.S.S.?

ARE YOU UNAWARE OF YOUR RIGHTS?

CONTACT : CASTLEMILK
CLAIMANTS
UNION

THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
15 DOUGRIE TERRACE
CASTLEMILK

MONDAY : 10am-12pm 2pm-4pm
THURSDAY : 10am-12pm 2pm-4pm
FRIDAY : 10am-12pm 2pm-4pm

634-D 819

CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS UNION CLAIMANTS

634-0 819

ARE YOU SICK OF THE
SOCIAL SECURITY!

*ARE YOU BEING MESSED ABOUT WITH YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY OR
UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT?

*HAVE YOU BEEN REFUSED AN APPOINTMENT?

*ARE THE STAFF RUDE OR CHEEKY TO YOU?

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

COME TO A MEETING OF THE "CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION"
ON TUESDAY 17th JANUARY 1978

AT 2pm or 7.30pm

IN THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT, 15 DOUGRIE TERRACE.

WE ARE FELLOW SUFFERERS

- NOT SOCIAL WORKERS!

UNITE FOR OUR OWN BENEFIT!

BE THERE!

THIS COULD BE WORTH MONEY!!

ARE YOU HAVING TROUBLE CLAIMING YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS OR MAKING AN APPOINTMENT?

DO YOU KNOW YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT AND WHAT YOU ARE ENTITLED TO?

COME TO THE MEETINGS OF THE CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION EVERY TUESDAY AT 2p.m; AND 7.30p.m. IN THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT, 15 DOUGRIE TERRACE, CASTLEMILK.

APPEALS

HOW TO APPEAL

Simply write a letter to the local supplementary benefit office stating that I WISH TO APPEAL AGAINST RECENT DECISION REGARDING

Keep a copy of your appeal and don't forget to put a date on it. It's amazing how these things get "lost" at either local or regional office. You can make your appeal as long as you like, but remember that you normally only have THREE WEEKS in which to appeal. So don't delay. You can appeal against almost any decision, or refusal which leaves you dissatisfied. It doesn't cost any money to appeal. And you don't need a Solicitor, or any legal backing. But it normally takes 3-4 weeks for the appeal to be heard. In an emergency an appeal has been heard within a few days. To achieve this, phone the SS Clerk to the Supplementary Benefits Appeal Tribunal at your REGIONAL OHSS OFFICE. Sometimes, (eg. if your money is stopped because the SS allege co-habitation), the SS have to PAY YOU PENDING YOUR APPEAL. In other words, if ever your supplementary benefit is cut off for any reason, the SS must pay you at a reduced rate until your appeal is heard. If you are worried about your appeal going "astray", send a copy to the Appeal Tribunal Clerk at Regional Office, and keep pestering him or her for a date of hearing.

NEVER GO TO AN APPEAL TRIBUNAL ALONE AND NEVER GO UNPREPARED

About a week before the Hearing you will receive two sheets of paper, setting out your appeal. 'Observations of the Commission', and an 'Assessment' of how your benefit has been worked out. Go through this thoroughly with your two friends/representatives. Make notes of any points you want to bring up at the hearing.

The Appeal Hearing is at some place away from the SS Office, eg. the Town Hall. The tribunal consists of THREE PEOPLE. The one in the centre is the CHAIRMAN. One other person is the Local Trades Council appointee (usually a trade union branch secretary), and the third person is usually a Social Worker, or Chamber of Commerce representative. Ask them their names so that you will know them again. Also present is the CLERK to the tribunal who is supposed to be independent (but in fact he is a paid SS Official, based at Regional Office); and the PRESENTING OFFICER (another SS Official who puts the case for the SS). The Presenting Officer represents the SS at every appeal. Consequently, he knows the Members of the Tribunal well, and he knows exactly how to put his side of the case to touch on the Member's prejudices. Also, he is often a higher grade SS Officer than the Clerk, with the result that he often tells the Clerk his job (ie. what section of the Act the Appeal refers to etc.)

Thanks to Claimants Union activity in the past, you can now have TWO REPRESENTATIVES with you at the appeal tribunal hearing. You can also have any relatives, or people directly affected by the decision in with you. You can also call witnesses and produce evidence eg a letter from your doctor, worn clothing, or bedding and damp wallpaper etc. Don't be frightened of attending the Hearing (You definitely won't get anything if you don't turn up) It's not a court of law - don't be intimidated!

EVERY APPEAL COSTS THEM TIME AND MONEY. IF THEY MAKE LIFE AWKWARD FOR YOU - DO THE SAME TO THEM. ——— JOIN YOUR LOCAL CLAIMANTS UNION AND GET THEM TO BACK YOU UP ———

NEVER GO ON YOUR OWN ——— NEVER MEET THE SS ALONE.

CLAIMANTS UNITE

HISTORY AND POLITICAL AIMS OF CLAIMANTS MOVEMENT * EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR KIDS

Life on the breadline

Mass unemployment and the poverty which it means for the 1½ million people out of work in September should not be allowed to hide the permanent poverty which the Welfare State with its system of welfare payments, like rent rebates and social security, imposes on claimants throughout the country.

Pensioners, unsupported mothers and fathers, the sick and disabled, low wage earners, are all too familiar with life on the breadline.

"The right to an adequate income without means test for all people" is the first and basic demand of the claimants movement and of the 80 Claimants Unions in Britain. Inflation and the labour government's policy of unemployment make it even more essential that claimants unite to fight for their basic rights and for their demands.

Common struggle

Community action and the Claimants Movement have three main things in common:

- * the State rations out payments like social security or school uniform grants in the same way that it rations and controls council housing, or conceals its failures to clear slums behind talk of "priorities" and "limited resources". It can be a "means test" or a council waiting list, but you always have to "qualify".
- * A decent wage like a decent home is not a basic right in our society, it has to be fought for. When tenants unite into associations and people claiming social security form unions, they are fighting basically the same battles. Community action is united action across a broad front!



- * The ranks of the claimants include tenants and workers. Tenants associations, trade union branches, community groups, often find they have to give advice and support to members on "welfare rights" and benefits. For this service to members accurate and up-to-date information is essential.

IN THIS ISSUE we concentrate on:-

THE CLAIMANTS MOVEMENT - the origin of claimants unions, political aims, organisation, the National Federation, setting up a union.
BACK AT SCHOOL - what benefits can parents claim for their children at school.

Claimants Movement

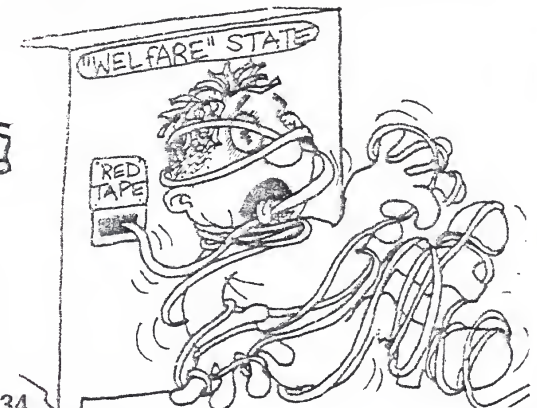
The Claimants Movement stands out in the community action field because it has set up a national organisation - the National Federation of Claimants Unions - to which 80 unions are affiliated. The Federation is the political and administrative focus of the movement.

History

The first Claimants Union (C.U.) was set up in Balsall Heath, Birmingham, at a meeting in autumn, 1968. A group met to discuss local housing issues, but during the meeting it became clear that those on social security were more interested in doing something about grievances and ill-treatment under the social security system.

What was lacking for claimants was an organisation equivalent to the Trade Union Movement. So the first C.U. was set up, to represent members at social security offices and at appeals, and to work nationally for radical changes in the Welfare State system itself.

So from the start the aims of the C.U.'s were much more than obtaining justice for the individual claimant. Of the 3 aspects of C.U. work - political, fighting claims and social activities, (e.g. playgroups), they regard the political work as the most important. So, for example, national campaigns have been organised on unemployment, the Cohabitation Rule and higher national benefits.



Organisation

In 1970 the National Federation of Claimants Unions (NFCU) was set up. The NFCU is democratically controlled by the unions. There is no central bureaucracy. Tasks like publicity or printing the Newspaper are divided up between the unions which assemble every 3 months for national meetings to discuss policy, etc. National meetings are rotated around the country so that no one union takes control.

As the number of active unions grew, the need for better communications and more coordination between groups increased. It was decided to set up a regional structure. Britain is divided into 9 regions. The unions in each region meet in between national meetings and appoint one union to co-ordinate regional activity, e.g. hold stocks of publication, help new unions get off the ground.

To be affiliated to the National Federation a Claimants Union is expected to;

- * be a bona fide union of claimants, run and controlled by claimants and ex-claimants.
- * hold regular weekly meetings open to all claimants.
- * support the claimants Charter.



The Claimants Charter

- 1 The right to an adequate income, without means -test, for all people.
- 2 A socialist society in which all necessities are provided free and which is managed and controlled directly by the people.
- 3 No secrets and the right to full information.
- 4 No distinction between the so-called deserving and undeserving.

The 9 regional unions are (autumn 1975):-

NORTH THAMES East London CU, Dame Colet House, Ben Jonson Road, London E1. Tel. 01- 790 3867 + 4672

LONDON SOUTH SE London CU, The Albany, Creek Road, Deptford, London. Tel 01-692 1047

MIDLANDS Aston CU, 19 Carlyle Road, Birmingham 16 Tel. 021-455 0566

NORTH South Tyneside CU, Peoples Place, Derby Terrace, South Shields, Tyne and Wear. Tel 08943-65062

Political aims

Although the 80 unions vary greatly in membership, local problems and local political aims, etc, the basis of a common political agreement was approved in January 1974 at the Leeds conference.

The "Leeds Agreement", printed in full in Claimants Newspaper No. 4, states the absolute opposition of the movement to the repression of the Welfare State, which keeps people in poverty. Further, it opposes the exploitation of work by capitalism, and demands that people take control of their lives, in the factory and in the community. The agreement accepts the need for greater organisation within the working class, and for "unity of action" with other groups in other struggles - tenants groups, trade unions etc.

Campaigns

- * The movement is campaigning heavily on womens issues, especially the Cohabitation Rule. (see Claimants Newspaper No. 5).
- * The Federation has successfully fought for the abolition of the Wage Stop, for the setting up of the appointment system in SS offices and for claimants to be allowed 2 representatives at Appeals Tribunals.
- * A major Unemployment campaign is starting in November, together with an Unemployment handbook, leaflets, meetings with Trade Unions etc.

The Unemployment Campaign is being co-ordinated by the South East London Claimants Union. Copies of handbook (30p) + more information from them.

- * Local CU's have fought collaboration between DHSS and employers on individual disputes (South Shields), exposed biased evidence against claimants at Appeals (Swansea) etc.
- * We will cover these local and national campaigns in more detail in later issues of Community Action.

NORTH WEST Manchester CU, Moss Side Peoples Centre, St.Mary's, Moss Lane East, Manchester 15,

SOUTH WEST Bristol CU, 54 Richmond Road, Bristol 6 Tel. 0274-422310

WALES Swansea CU, 79 Brookesby Road, Swansea.

SCOTLAND Edinburgh CU, 20 Stanley Road, Edinburgh. Tel. 031-552 2901

NORTHERN IRELAND Derry CU, 87 Bishop Street, Derry. Tel. 0804-65703

Claimants union.. publications

C.U. publications can be obtained from the nearest regional co-ordinating union. (Please send enough money to cover postage).

Claimants Newspaper ... 15p

The newspaper covers C.U. campaigns - national and local - and welfare rights information. Claimants Newspaper No.5 autumn 1975, includes reports on the fight against the compulsory savings policy of DHSS, the visiting officer, rights of school leavers without work, national C.U. campaign for higher supplementary allowances related to the real cost of living.

Back numbers available. No.4 covers SS Appeals Tribunals etc. Claimants Publications: to subscribe - c/o 19 Carlisle Road, Ladywood, Birmingham 16. £1.50 for a full year.

Women and Social Security 30p

Pensioners Struggle 50p

Strikers Handbook 15p

Forms (Appeals, claims, complaints) ½p each

Badges (5p) Stickers (1p) Posters (2p)

Unemployment Handbook 1975 30p



RIGHT, THEN, BEFORE I GO SHOPPING:
WOULD YOU RATHER DIE OF COLD OR STARVATION?

Claimants



Organise

WE OUGHT TO GET TOGETHER!

SETTING UP A CLAIMANTS UNION

Things are changing at your local social security office. Yours may not yet have wall-to-wall carpeting and canned music but subtle changes have been taking place since the old National Assistance Board days. The endless queues and hard benches have been replaced by the appointment system, home visits and postal review schemes, cash over the counter has been replaced by the automatic computer Giro, the public 'confessions of poverty' in the waiting room have been replaced by semi-private interview cubicles and we are now called 'claimants' rather than 'applicants'. This new, streamlined approach by the DHSS has made it easier for them to contain claimants' anger by separating them from each other, to pay more attention to what they call their 'problem cases' and to prevent any confrontation at the point of contact in the local office.

But for the individual claimant these 'improvements' have not made it easier to break through to claim what is not only his or her right but also the only source of income that the claimant has. Community Action supports the setting up of claimants unions because we've learnt that our strength comes through united action whether it be in tenants groups, trade unions or claimants unions. Claimants organized together in unions pose a far greater threat to the 'welfare system', the underpinning of our entire economic system, as they attempt to give back to people the confidence to act on their own behalf and to support others, which the Social Security 'welfare system' takes away.

This article attempts to show:

- how to set up a claimants union
- some of the problems unions have come up against in getting organized and how they've tried to overcome them.

How to start

★ Most unions start with at least 2 people willing to do the work of making contact with other claimants, organizing the first meeting and starting to help others with their claims. If you are keen and persistent you could start

it singlehanded, although it will probably take a long time to build up. You will need access to a typewriter and a duplicating machine at the outset for leaflets and have somewhere to hold the first meeting. Some areas have a community centre and some have a neighbourhood advice centre where there will be facilities and rooms available. If you don't have a local community centre, then try church halls, youth clubs, libraries, etc. You may need a small amount of money to start off with to buy paper for advertising the first meeting. Produce a short leaflet advertising date, time and place of the first meeting and distribute it at the employment exchange, social security office and to any local groups in your area which may already involve claimants e.g. tenants associations, womens groups, etc. However, there is probably no better advert than 'word of mouth'.



★ Advice and support on setting up a union is freely available from your nearest Regional Co-ordinating union. They produce leaflets, C.U. publications which unions get at a large discount and someone will probably be willing to give a talk at your first meeting. For the address of your nearest regional union, see CA no.22, p.35, or the Claimants Newspaper, available from Claimants Publications Library, 19 Carlyle Road, Birmingham 16.

★ The focal point of nearly all unions is the regular weekly meeting open to all claimants. The meeting usually covers individual claims and appeals, political issues and 'Regional' and 'National Federation of Claimants Unions' business. All claimants have by necessity a lot of personal experience of claiming individually and the purpose of the first few meetings will be to pool this experience in an attempt to support and advise each other to sort out common problems. A supply of claim, appeal and complaint forms can be obtained from the NFCU which often have a 'magical' effect on the DHSS.

★ There can be no blue-print for setting up a strong claimants union but the essence is one of

rank and file control and there are therefore certain minimum standards. Claimants unions believe in total control of the union by all its members: no 'experts', no leaders, no 'casework' by specialists, no indispensable activists. In striving for these things, unions face a variety of problems.

The Meeting Place

The majority of groups are either home based or use a local neighbourhood centre as their base. Unions that operate from someone's home have nearly always found that it has led to an over-concentration of union activity in one place.

Claimants have tended to see the house as an 'advice bureau' and call round whenever they need urgent individual assistance, thus making the people who live in the house the people who 'run' the union. This could also cause practical problems, e.g. running up large telephone bills. Unions that operate from a neighbourhood centre have the advantages of a neutral base that all

Commitment

No group can keep going without enthusiasm. Just because a claimant comes to a weekly meeting, it doesn't mean to say that he or she will keep coming when his/her own claim has been sorted out. Some unions find this disheartening and have become resigned to it. Other unions see it as inevitable but try to combat it by stressing the need to put something into the union in order to get anything out and by concentrating recruitment on long-term claimants. There are various ways in which unions can encourage enthusiasm and commitment, such as:

- making sure that the union becomes involved in local campaigns, e.g. against cuts, unemployment etc.
- joining in with the campaigns of the National Federation of Claimants Unions, e.g. the current Fight to Live campaign which joined trade unions in the November 27 unemployment lobby.
- by having social activities as part of a meeting, e.g. Brent C.U. operates a small food co-op once a fortnight. The

food is bought cheaply and sold to union members at the end of the meeting. Any excess goes to a pensioners group; also, by ensuring that all members commit themselves at least to regular financial support. Many C.U.s charge a 25p membership fee and then collect a 5p sub every week from members. This enables unions to bulk-buy leaflets, pamphlets, etc. and the issuing of membership cards helps to form a group identity.



claimants can use, a common phone number and mailing address plus somewhere to store information, put up posters and meet new claimants. However, as most centres give over-the-counter advice to individual claimants, many claimants won't see any need to join a union and go to weekly meetings. Many unions have resolved this problem by asking the centre to refer all claimants to the weekly meeting and only to advise in cases of real urgency, at the same time emphasising that the union is the only effective means of dealing with the S.S.

Knowledge is power!

In any group, be it a tenants group, a union branch or a claimants union there is the tendency for the more experienced and 'knowledgeable' members to monopolize meetings. In Claimants unions there is also a problem when one claimant is obsessed with talking about his or her own claim. Unions must be constantly aware of these dangers from the outset and a chairperson is usually necessary to make sure that everyone has

an equal chance of discussing individual claims and the business of the union. Every claim should be discussed by everyone at the meeting and tactics for dealing with them should be decided together. Some unions use part of the meeting for discussing the writing of information leaflets and others will organize a rota-system whereby each member swots up on a particular aspect of DHSS policy or law and then passes the knowledge on to other members at the weekly meeting. All unions have copies or access to these pamphlets and books which are essential tools for the fight with the DHSS.

The Supplementary Benefits Handbook. Price 50p from HMSO.

Penguin Guide to Supplementary Benefits by Tony Lynes. Price 45p.

Supplementary Benefit Act, 1966 and 1971, available from HMSO.

Claimants Union pamphlets and Newspaper which are available at reduced prices for claimants unions from Claimants Library, 19 Carlyle Road, Birmingham 16.

Relationship with trade unions



Although Claimants unions are non-party political, they can't exist in a political vacuum. Claimants must realise that their exploitation by the 'welfare system' is part and parcel of a wider exploitation of the working class as workers, tenants, women, blacks and claimants. Winning a few pence more for claimants, although of great value to the individual claimant, is not a great victory in itself. As South Shields C.U. writes: "The members are working-class people whose only difference from Trade Union members is that they are not at present working (many also are or have been Trade Unionists); therefore the Claimants Union is an integral part of the rank and file labour movement." This is not just high-flown talk either because an important development in the South-East Claimants movement has been the setting up of a Joint Strike Claims Committee within the Trades Council composed of trade unionists and claimants union members. Whenever a union is involved in a work dispute, the Committee offers its 'expertise' and support to the

dispute. During the 1972 Miners Strike, miners in the South East were getting twice as much money per head for strikers families than anywhere else in the country. This was the direct result of the activities on the Trades Council of C.U. members. Since then a number of trade union branches have themselves affiliated to the local claimants union.

In Coventry, plant claimants committees have been set up to advise and support unemployed car workers and those threatened with short-time working and redundancy at Chryslers.



Not all claimants unions see the forging of links with the labour movement as desirable; some consider trade unions to be male-dominated bureaucracies and trade unionists to be 'those people who sit on the opposite side of the bench at appeal tribunals'. This is a problem which each claimants union will have to resolve locally for themselves.

Relationship with Tenants Associations

Although not all C.U. members may consider themselves 'workers' in the same way as South Shields C.U. does, almost all C.U. members are also tenants and may already belong to tenants associations. There is a great scope for these groups

to work together and support and advise each other. Tenants associations frequently come into contact with the means-tested 'welfare system' in the form of rent and rate rebate schemes. Many tenants, although in full-time work may be claiming such benefits as Family Income Supplement. In these areas the distinction between 'claimant' and 'tenant' starts to blur and tenants associations may wish to start their own claimants union from amongst their own members.

As claimants, workers and tenants we are all fighting the same fight. Trade Unions fight for better wages and conditions. Tenants groups fight for better housing conditions in their street. Tenants groups and trade unions should join in a united front with claimants unions who are struggling for an adequate income for all working-class people.

HOUS

The
blis
THE
ance
a H
hea
dev
SAB
Are
Mar

HOUS

Det
Com
be
cav
sys
avs
the
1 :

G.:

Th
Re
wc
Cc
b:
A
a
c
s
u

The DHSS has just announced new plans to deal with Social Security 'scroungers' in the Bristol area. There will be a team of 35 'field officers' and 200 office staff backed up with expensive computer facilities and radio cars, etc., to investigate fraud.

In 1972 it was estimated that Tax Fraud involved an average of £1,000 per case. Social Security Fraud average £21 per case.

Only 1% of suspected Tax Fraud cases result in prosecutions.
Over 40% of Social Security Fraud cases result in prosecutions.

British Companies are avoiding paying approximately £2,000 million a year in Corporation Tax. (Bank of England Quarterly Bulletin, June 1977). This is equivalent to the total costs paid out in Supplementary Benefit.

There are £300 million pounds of Benefit unclaimed each year. Given the rules and attitudes that exist this money will never be claimed and people will continue to suffer hardship. Benefit must be paid of Right to all individuals.

The following extract from the Secret Codes that the Social Security use give an indication as to why Claimants are made to feel guilty about the present system:-

For official use only

Circular AX/44

CLAIMANTS WHO FAIL TO TAKE THE CHANCE OF A JOB

Introduction

1. New procedures have recently been agreed with the Department of Employment and the Manpower Services Commission for obtaining decisions and opinions from the IO in respect of claimants who fail to take the chance of a suitable job. This

3. A claimant should be regarded as having failed to take the chance of a job if he could reasonably have been expected to know of a specific job and failed, refused or neglected either to apply for, or accept it, or failed to attend an interview in connection with obtaining the job. Some examples of this type of conduct are given below but the list is not exhaustive -

- (1) imposing unreasonable conditions on the acceptance of a job;
- (2) refusing to give references or allow references to be taken up;

- (3) delaying acceptance of a job until the vacancy has otherwise been filled;
- (4) creating an unfavourable impression at an interview with an employer, eg by being deliberately obstructive, apathetic or appearing to be under the influence of alcohol;
- (5) failing to attend an interview with an employer;
- (6) failing to return to work on the day agreed for general resumption following a stoppage of work or period of short-time working;
- (7) failing to take a job offered as an alternative to redundancy;
- (8) failing to continue in a job when the employer varies the terms or conditions of employment;
- (9) refusing the job offered;
- (10) accepting a job but failing to start work on the agreed date.

Support Claimants in the struggle for a decent standard of living without the fear and intimidation by the DHSS AND the media.

Contact Bristol Campaign Against the Supplementary Benefit Review (CASBR)
Or Bristol Claimants Union
Write to 110 Cheltenham Road
Bristol 6
Tel: 40491

CLAIMANTS WHO FAIL TO TAKE THE CHANCE OF A JOB

Introduction

1. New procedures have recently been agreed with the Department of Employment and the Manpower Services Commission for obtaining decisions and opinions from the IO in respect of claimants who fail to take the chance of a suitable job. This

3. A claimant should be regarded as having failed to take the chance of a job if he could reasonably have been expected to know of a specific job and failed, refused or neglected either to apply for, or accept it, or failed to attend an interview in connection with obtaining the job. Some examples of this type of conduct are given below but the list is not exhaustive -

- (1) imposing unreasonable conditions on the acceptance of a job;
- (2) refusing to give references or allow references to be taken up;
- (3) delaying acceptance of a job until the vacancy had otherwise been filled;
- (4) creating an unfavourable impression at an interview with an employer, eg by being deliberately obstructive, apathetic or appearing to be under the influence of alcohol;
- (5) failing to attend an interview with an employer;
- (6) failing to return to work on the day agreed for general resumption following a stoppage of work or period of short-time working;
- (7) failing to take a job offered as an alternative to redundancy;
- (8) failing to continue in a job when the employer varies the terms or conditions of employment;
- (9) refusing the job offered;
- (10) accepting a job but failing to start work on the agreed date.

Printed above are extracts of secret rules which the DHSS operate when dealing with Claimants. They are illegal as they break the Employment Protection Act.

THIS IS NOT THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH UNEMPLOYED CLAIMANTS ARE PUNISHED. OTHERS INCLUDE:-

1. A 40% reduction in your money if you leave your job 'voluntarily' or if you were dismissed for 'INDUSTRIAL MISCONDUCT'.
2. A Supplementary Allowance can be reduced below the amount so calculated or may be withdrawn, SCHEDULE 1, PARAGRAPH 3(1)b.
3. UNEMPLOYED ARE NOT ENTITLED TO THE LONG TERM ADDITION (£4.35 a week extra) and even those who are unlikely ever to get work (like disabled older men and women who are nearing retirement and who sign every 3 months) don't get this addition.
4. The Unemployment Review Officer often threatens or actually prosecutes the unemployed for "FAILURE TO MAINTAIN ONESELF". By the Supplementary Benefit Commission's own figures, over 60% of Claimants who see this officer stop claiming benefit within a few weeks. There are over 1,500,000 unemployed and more if you count people who don't sign on.

CAN YOU AFFORD TO LET THE UNEMPLOYED AND OTHER CLAIMANTS BE PUNISHED LIKE THIS?

WHAT HAVE YOU OR YOUR TRADE UNION DONE ABOUT THIS?

Contact Bristol Campaign Against the Supplementary Benefit Review (CASBR)
Or Bristol Claimants Union
Write to 110 Cheltenham Road
Bristol 6
Tel: 40491

SOCIAL SECURITY^{*}

fact&fiction

Are you the person who has a mate whose neighbour knows someone who got a colour telly from social security? If not, you've probably heard the one about the bloke who's getting his dole paid in pesetas. There are a lot of these sorts of stories about. Is there any truth in them?

FICTION: PEOPLE ARE BETTER OFF ON THE DOLE THAN IN WORK

- FACT:** The rates of unemployment benefit are set deliberately low to encourage people to work. It is only possible for someone to be better off on the dole than in work if his/her wages are extremely low or s/he has a very large family, or both.
- FACT:** In a recent official survey of unemployed men on social security, it was found that 77 out of 100 received benefit of less than 80% of their income when in work and for over 50 in every 100 it was less than 60%. Only 12 in every 100 had an income on benefit which came to at least 90% of their work income.
- FACT:** Anyone who voluntarily leaves a job or is dismissed for misconduct is automatically disqualified from unemployment benefit for 6 weeks.

FICTION: MOST PEOPLE ON SOCIAL SECURITY ARE ON THE FIDDLE

- FACT:** In the financial year 1975/6, social security fraud amounted to approximately 3p in every £100 paid out. For every £100 collected in tax last year, another £3.60 was evaded.
- FACT:** In 1975/6 social security fraud and suspected fraud cost the country £2.6 million; tax evasion cost an estimated £1,000 million.
- FACT:** Of 485 cases of alleged fraud reported by M.P. Iain Sproat, only 22 allegations were found to be justified. 59 of the cases were people who had never been claimants! The cost of the taxpayer of investigating Mr. Sproat's allegations has been officially estimated at over £10,000.

FICTION: SOCIAL SECURITY LOOKS AFTER EVERYBODY

- FACT:** It is estimated that in 1976 947,000 people who would have been entitled to supplementary benefit failed to claim.
- FACT:** Official sources estimate the amount of unclaimed supplementary benefit in that year as £240 million.

FICTION: SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIMANTS JUST DON'T WANT TO WORK

- FACT:** The vast majority of claimants are not able to work because they are pensioners, sick, disabled, or one-parent families who have young children to look after.
- FACT:** There is a group of claimants who could work — of the jobs were available. In September 1976 there were 9 unemployed people for each vacancy at the unemployment exchanges, and there were 54 people in competition for every "general labourer" vacancy.
- FACT:** In September 1977, there were 1,609,000 registered unemployed; when women who fail to register and the self-employed who cannot find work are taken into account, the real figure must be much higher. It is not the will to work that's missing, but the jobs.

CLAIMANTS UNION

UNITY IS STRENGTH



FICTION: BRITAIN'S SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM IN THE BEST IN THE WORLD

- FACT:** We spend less on social benefits as a percentage of our national wealth than the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Luxembourg, Belgium, France, or Ireland.
- FACT:** Our rate of expenditure on social benefits is rising more slowly than that of any other Common Market country.

EAST LONDON
★
CLAIMANTS UNION
MEETS EVERY WEEK...
7.30PM ON WEDNESDAYS
AT DAME COLET
HOUSE,
BEN JONSON
ROAD,
STEPNEY GREEN
E1

If you are sick, unemployed,
retired or a single parent
then get the support of this
Union for people claiming social
security benefits.

We work together to get all our
members their full entitlement
and to campaign for a guaranteed
minimum income for every person
in or out of employment

01-790-3867

THE CLAIMANTS CHARTER

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) A adequate income without means
test for all people | (3) No secrets and the right to
full information. |
| (2) A socialist society in which all
necessities are provided free
and which is managed and controlled
directly by the people. | (4) No distinction between socalled
"deserving" and "undeserving"
claimants. |

CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION

UNEMPLOYED?		
PENSIONER?	DO YOU	IF NOT
SICK?	KNOW	JOIN
DISABLED?	YOUR	CASTLEMILK
WIDOW?	RIGHTS?	CLAIMANTS
SINGLE PARENT?		UNION

+ PUBLIC MEETING +

"Welfare Rights and the Right to Decent Housing"

TUESDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 7.30pm

LESSER HALL, CASTLEMILK COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Meeting is open to anyone interested in helping to fight
for a better deal for the people of Castlemilk.

+ WHAT WE STAND FOR +

We believe that people can only get what they are due by
organising to fight for it.

UNITY IS STRENGTH!

We call for an adequate income for all, equal treatment
for all from Social Security and the right to full
information about benefits for everybody.

We say that, in the end, only a socialist society can
guarantee decent living standards for all, decent facilities
and freedom from want and poverty.

+ JOIN CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION +

Meetings are held on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays 10.00am to
12.00 and 2.00pm to 4.00pm

IN THE

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
15 DOUGRIE TERRACE

If you want to know more, come and see us or phone 634 0819

CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION

+ KNOW YOUR RIGHTS +

Unemployment and Sickness Benefit - Standard Rates

This is due to you if you have 26 National Insurance Stamps in the last contribution year.

Unemployment benefit is based on a standard rate plus an earnings related supplement.

Standard Rate

Single Person	-	£15.75
Wife or Dependent Relative	-	9.75
Child Dependent	-	1.85

Supplementary Benefit - Standard Rates

These are available to any person over 16, registered for work, retired, sick or a single parent family.

Couple	£25.25
Single Householder	15.55
Any Other Person 18 or Over	12.45
16 - 17	9.55
13 - 15	7.95
11 - 12	6.55
5 - 10	5.30
Under 5	4.40
Plus rent and rates	

You MAY also qualify for additions if:

1. Your home is difficult to heat - HEATING ALLOWANCE
2. You need special food - DIET ALLOWANCE
3. You have to visit relatives in hospital or prison - FARES ALLOWANCE

You WILL qualify for lump sum payments from time to time for major items of expenditure.

Clothing and footwear,	
Furniture and bedding,	EXCEPTIONAL
Floor coverings,	NEEDS PAYMENTS
Funeral expenses, etc.	

{ XMAS GREETINGS
FROM
} SOCIAL SECURITY

THE FAMILY

Unemployed, sick, disabled ?

If you and your family have to depend on Social Security for your living, then you will be finding life hard this winter. With soaring inflation and huge heating bills, etc., no doubt you will be wondering how you are going to buy the children their Christmas presents.

Every year, members of the Claimants Unions all over the country ask the S.S. for a special payment to help with the cost of buying their children a Christmas present.

THIS YEAR, WHY DON'T YOU ?

CAN THE S.S. DO IT ?

Section 3 (1) of the 1976 Supplementary Benefits Act states -

'Where it appears to the Commission reasonable in all circumstances, they may determine that Supplementary Benefit shall be paid to a person by way of a single payment to meet an exceptional need.'

Christmas is an exceptional need, after all it only comes once a year.

It's not your fault if the Government has made you unemployed, nor is it your fault if you are sick or disabled, or if you are left on your own with a family to look after.

Many would consider that the present Labour Government has deliberately created unemployment and are determined to keep it at a high level, what they call 'a surplus pool of labour.' But it wouldn't do for them to admit that the unemployed should be respected for being in a position which is no fault of their own.



Many Tories and members of the ruling class are only too eager to find a scapegoat for the ailing economy. When they are not heaping the blame on Black immigrants, they pile it on another section of the community - the Claimants. The press and television foster the myth of spongers living off the welfare State. Since they have always lived in luxury, they know nothing of its cruel and discretionary nature. They know little or nothing of how the Social Security cheats and abuses the Claimants over their so-called entitlements.

As a claimant, you will know that you have got to fight the S.S. for every penny, otherwise you will get nothing.

HOW TO CLAIM FOR A SPECIAL PAYMENT

1. Use the form we have attached below.
2. Don't forget to keep a copy.
3. Claim only in writing, they will try to laugh off a verbal request.
4. Make sure you get their decision in writing.
5. If they refuse, don't forget to appeal.

.....
Copy the wording on the form below when you apply to Social Security.
If you know of any other people who have to 'exist' on Social Security, then please let them read this leaflet.

The Manager,
Local Office,
D.H.S.S. (Supplementary Benefits),
.....
.....

NAME.....
ADDRESS.....
.....
DATE.....

Dear Sir,

SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS ACT 1976

Using your powers of DISCRETION under Section 3 (1) of the 1976 Supplementary Benefits Act, please grant me a special payment to buy Christmas presents for my children.

I havechild/children (state number of children under 16 years).

SIGNATURE.....

Castlemilk Claimants

L Union. L

MEETINGS

Mon. — Fri. Hours. 9. 30 am. — 12
" " " afternoons 1. 30 — 5 p
Tues. & Thurs. Evenings 7. 30. — 10

CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION

UNEMPLOYED?		
PENSIONER?	DO YOU	IF NOT
	KNOW	JOIN
SICK?	YOUR	CASTLEMILK
DISABLED?	RIGHTS?	CLAIMANTS
		UNION
WIDOW?		
SINGLE PARENT?		

+ PUBLIC MEETING +

"Welfare Rights and the Right to Decent Housing"

TUESDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 7.30pm

LESSER HALL, CASTLEMILK COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Meeting is open to anyone interested in helping to fight for a better deal for the people of Castlemilk.

+ WHAT WE STAND FOR +

We believe that people can only get what they are due by organising to fight for it.

UNITY IS STRENGTH!

We call for an adequate income for all, equal treatment for all from Social Security and the right to full information about benefits for everybody.

We say that, in the end, only a socialist society can guarantee decent living standards for all, decent facilities and freedom from want and poverty.

+ JOIN CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS UNION +

Meetings are held on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays 10.00am to 12.00 and 2.00pm to 4.00pm

IN THE

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
15 DOUGRIE TERRACE

CASTLEMILK CLAIMANTS' UNION

+ KNOW YOUR RIGHTS +

Unemployment and Sickness Benefit - Standard Rates

This is due to you if you have 26 National Insurance Stamps in the last contribution year.

Unemployment benefit is based on a standard rate plus an earnings related supplement.

Standard Rate

Single Person	-	£15.75
Wife or Dependent Relative	-	9.75
Child Dependent	-	1.85

Supplementary Benefit - Standard Rates

These are available to any person over 16, registered for work, retired, sick or a single parent family.

Couple	£25.25
Single Householder	15.55
Any Other Person 18 or Over	12.45
16 - 17	9.55
13 - 15	7.95
11 - 12	6.55
5 - 10	5.30
Under 5	4.40
Plus rent and rates	

You MAY also qualify for additions if:

1. Your home is difficult to heat - HEATING ALLOWANCE
2. You need special food - DIET ALLOWANCE
3. You have to visit relatives in hospital or prison - FARES ALLOWANCE

You WILL qualify for lump sum payments from time to time for major items of expenditure.

Clothing and footwear,
Furniture and bedding,
Floor coverings,
Funeral expenses, etc.

EXCEPTIONAL
NEEDS PAYMENTS
